

Innis Herald
'91-'92
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Graduation
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Grad News

Art Type Stuff

by Melissa Young

As many of you may have noticed, the photographs on the walls beside Town Hall have been changed. This is due to efforts of a very small group of people from the ICSS. The idea is to feature the work of a student photographer in that space. Currently, this group is looking for student or students who want to display their work in the space for the month of December. The current grouping is from Maria Young entitled "What makes you so special?"

In the spring the ICSS sponsors

a photo contest.

Details will be available after the holidays.

If you are interested in showing your work, or helping out contact Melissa Young or leave a note with your name and phone in the ICSS office, and someone will get back to you about the next meeting.

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Information will be posted about the sitting after Reading Week.

If you want to be in the composite (photo of everyone) and will be graduating in November 1992, you may want to get your photographs done in March as well.

Any other questions? Call the ICSS at 978-7368

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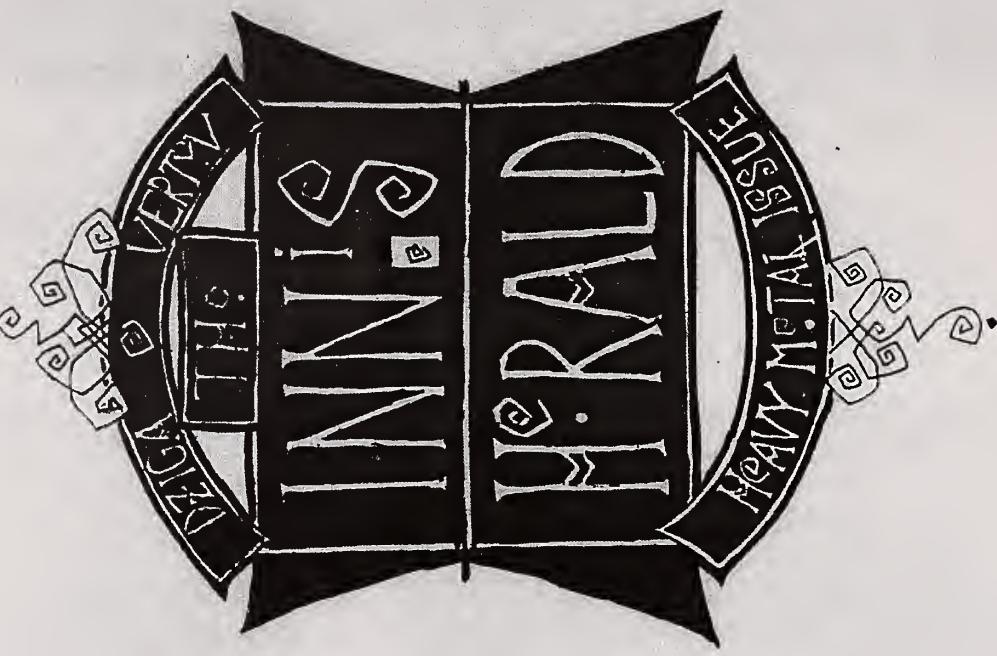
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ICSS

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Editorial Page

AIL and other four letter F-words

The twilight of the semester is nearing. I look back on the past three months with fondness, affection and a warm feeling in the bottom of my stomach which is remarkably akin to the sensation of nausea. As my old friend Jean Paul might have understood it, nausea is not simply the physical desire to "blow groceries", as they say, but also a type of existential anxiety which stems from the feeling of being alone in the world.

It also happens when you get an F on a paper.

I failed a test in Mr Gislason's grade nine geography class. I was a real shit disturber, as they say, and he once caught me forging a late slip, but that wasn't why I failed the test. I failed the test because I knew jack-shit about the topography of the Canadian Shield. I knew a lot about the topography of Tom Johnston's pectorals,

however. He was dreamy. But that didn't help me pass the test.

These days I pride myself in having a better command of my hormones and try not to let it interfere with my studies. And yet, and yet, I got an F.

For those of you not familiar with such terminology an F is any mark ranging from zero to thirty-five. F also stands for "fail". In addition, it is the first letter in the word flunk and the word flop. As well, the words feeble, fraud, and fascism. Featherbrain and fat-head also come to mind. And of course flauulence, which is defined by Webster's dictionary as "windy boastfulness".

Although this is seemingly irrelevant, you will see that all these F words eventually inter-twine. I think I'm on to something big here.

Windy boastfulness is far more apropos to this discussion than it

may appear. I think that just maybe, that is why my essay was failed. I was accused of being subjective. I was accused of being wrong. I was accused of being boastful in a windy kind of way.

See the connection? Flatulence... fail. Flatulence... fail.

It's all very clear to me now. Anywho, I'm not sure that I wasn't wrong. Sadly, I think my essay was a bit "gassy" to say the least, and due to my perseverance and girlish charm I was able to get a rewrite. Although the whole episode was very traumatic for me and my family, I must say I learned a lot from the whole experience. Firstly, it is possible to fail a paper. Secondly, I will never again write a paper under the influence of #26 at Saigon Palace. And thirdly, but not leastly, always have a bottle of Pepto Bismol handy when you embark upon that gastronomical journey of essay writing.

Letters

The Innis Herald has an open letters policy. Opinions expressed in letters, like all submissions, are attributable to their authors only; no liability is assumed by the Innsis Herald, the Student Society or the publisher. In fact the opinions expressed in this newspaper are attributable to absolutely no one.

Politically Parenthetical

Dear Herald,
I'm really confused about this "Politically correct" issue. Recently the Varsity had an issue called the "Attack on the Politically Correct" special issue or something.

Are we for being politically correct or not? While you answer that could you tell me the difference between a Progressive Conservative and a Liberal? Also do we still like the NDP or are they out too? What is the correct term for mental cases?

As well, are women allowed to hate men? Do men still hate women? Is De Palma a mysogonist? Is wrestling fixed? Is sex bad? Is Magic Johnson a hero cause he got aids? Does that mean that Liberace and Rock Hudson are heroes too?

Love,
Carl Marx

Herald Set:
Hey what do we look like, an encyclopedia or something? I'll try and answer your questions in no particular order: No, yes, no, no, it depends on the amount of free thought you possess, No, get it as often as you can, increase the peace. Sex is life. No he's a hero because he slept with a bajillion women. See above.

Big Big Fat Ass Bummer

Dear Herald:
I was reading the Gargoyle just the other day and I couldn't help but notice the name of your illustrious editor which just leapt off the page and smack into my face. She was quoted as saying that the potential closing of the Innis pub was "a big, big, fat ass bummer."

Is this the kind of woman you want at the helm of your ship? Is this the kind of woman you want to be the representative of the student voice of Innis College? Is this the kind of woman you want in your kitchen?

She should be impeached. Tared and feathered. Drawn and quartered. Bagged and loxed.

Signed,
Luke Perry

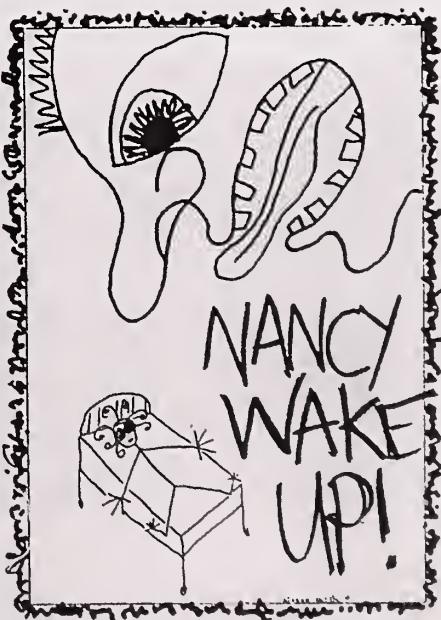
Dear Luke,
Thanks for writing.

Neil Out of Touch With Reality

Dear editor,
Do you know where you're going to? Do you like the things that life is showing you? Do you look for love and find that there's no open door? What are you hoping for? Do you know?

Just wondering,
Neil Young

Dear Neil:
Everybody have fun tonight.
Everybody Wang Chung tonight.
And I want that five bucks you owe me.



DZIGA VERTOV

by Steve Gravestock

Legend has it that, during the French Revolution, the peasants threw stones at clocks. They were so keyed up by the possibilities of change - a centuries old order had just fallen - that they believed they could overturn physical laws. During the Russian Revolution, it wasn't the peasants who threw stones at clocks; it was the filmmakers.

People like Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Dovzhenko began exploring the possibilities of a new, incredibly fertile medium, turning our notion of reality and association on its head in the process. Using the techniques pioneered by American filmmakers like D.W. Griffith, they also invented many of their own. They particularly relied on editing or montage; theorist Lev Kuleshov had shown how juxtaposing one image against another could create different associations. The filmmaker most excited by the possibilities of change, through ideological and technological means, was Dziga Vertov. The AGO will be screening several of his films from November 28-30th.

Even in this revolutionary context, Vertov was considered radical. Eisenstein dismissed his work calling it "formalist jackstraws and unmotivated camera mischief." (Some believe Eisenstein was jealous because Vertov had achieved "intellectual cinema" something Eisenstein - with his devotion to conventional narrative - could only talk about.)

Vertov began working on newsreels (for Lenin's propaganda trains). However, he soon concluded that the possibilities of film weren't being realized and he began assembling footage in a radically different manner. His films don't have narratives in the conventional sense. They are composed of scenes from everyday life: people working, marching, gathering, exercising, worshipping, and machinery. These activities are presented in a totally unique, kaleidoscopic manner using superimpositions, reversing the film, cutting between disparate scenes, and only holding onto a particular image for a brief time. His greatest, most accomplished work, *Man With a Movie Camera*, is a frenetic, insanely inventive look at life in the life of Moscow.

Unfortunately, Stalin came to power and instituted a strict social realist policy. This basically meant that filmmakers had to pander to the most aesthetically reactionary, slowest members of the audience and to the party officials. (Not surprisingly, these were often the same people.) Vertov was far too inventive and idiosyncratic to work in this structure and he fell out of favour. It didn't help that he was a fierce polemicist and had infuriated his fellow artists with some of his manifesto. Vertov was neglected

for years until Annette Michelson and Susan Sontag revived interest in him.

The films that will be shown at the AGO are lesser known and perhaps lesser works. *Three Songs for Lenin*, one of the films scheduled, was the last work Vertov was able to slip past the censors. (At least half way - the print at the AGO has been reconstructed. The party officials originally demanded more shots of Stalin.) However, an artist almost always exposes his "ideas," his fundamental beliefs, in his weaker material, and Vertov is no exception.

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Vertov's films represent probably the deepest union of ideology and technique I've ever seen. His radical politics and revolutionary aesthetics are completely compatible. This is most evident in his optimistic, view of technology. There's probably no filmmaker who viewed technology in the same ludicrously positive way that Vertov does. His films often overturn physical reality, but not just as a joke. For him, when he shows church spires toppling and then reverses the footage it is almost as if he believes that the spires have actually been restored. There's a primitivist aspect to his view of technology: he sees it as magic. (Born Dennis Kauffman, he changed his name to Dziga Vertov which means Spinning Top, to reflect his desire to transcend human limitations. The most famous photograph of him shows him suspended in mid-air.)

This view of technology is, of course, politically motivated; technology and communism, which knows how to use technology properly, rescues us from toil. Together they make work beautiful. *Enthusiasm*, which was screened at the Cinematheque several weeks ago, aestheticizes miners who have reached their quota early.

Often his work may seem

ridiculous because of this faith. He has a penchant for people moving in unison which may remind you of Busby Berkley. At times, his work seems like party line camp. (One of the ironic things about his career is that, despite the rather dogmatic nature of his politics, he was censored because he wasn't ideologically sound.) In *Three Songs*, there are several scenes which are supposed to show how mass production can spread Lenin's ideas. Vertov presents this in an incredibly exuberant manner with floodlights and a neon image of Lenin's face floating in the air. It looks like a premiere at Grauman's Chinese.

However, to approach his work only from this perspective would be historically and aesthetically irresponsible. What Vertov wanted to do was exploit technology to its utmost. In filmic terms, he certainly did. Any of his works could be used as a primer on avant-garde cinema. As other critics have noted, Vertov, along with Kenneth Anger, invented much of the vocabulary experimental filmmakers still use.

Besides being consistently compelling and extraordinarily beautiful - there are amazing shots of cities and factories at night in both *Enthusiasm* and *Three Songs* - his work also reminds us of cinema's lost possibilities. Vertov intended his work for everyone. His films weren't simply intended for educated audiences or bohemians. This approach is no longer conceivable. Watching Vertov reminds you of how the form has congealed both politically and aesthetically.

by Jason Helfenbaum

Once again Martin Scorsese casts Robert De Niro as the mixed-up bad guy in his latest film, *Cape Fear*. The film is a remake of the 1962 film of the same name, and features cameos by the original's three stars. De Niro plays Max Cady, a sociopath. What else is new? How many times has he played a violent deviate in a Scorsese film? This is of little importance. De Niro is a different sociopath every time, which makes you wonder how many sick combinations there are. He has offered us, amongst others, Travis Bickle, Rupert Pupkin, and Jake LaMotta - all of whom are unique in their twisted and violent ways, and the newest one - Max Cady - the Psycho from the South (as opposed to New York). Is by far the most different and complex yet.

Cady has just been released from a prison term for battery and sets his mind to exacting revenge on his former defence council, Sam Nelson, for having knowingly withheld evidence that cost Cady fourteen years. Nelson soon learns that Cady intends to get to him by injuring him and his family. Both Cady and Nelson start out as two dimensional characters - the psychopath from the joint, and the yuppie with his perfect family inside their perfect house in the suburbs. As Cady makes sure he becomes more and more a part of the Nelsons' lives we see that he is much craftier than we had expected, far more so than the Nelsons, who in reality, have a far from perfect homelife, something which Cady acts on.

Jessica Lange is excellent as Sam's wife, Leigh Lange resists becoming melodramatic, and through her we are able to see in a plausible light how Cady's presence becomes more and more disturbing. He is both a genius and a monster, and moves from being an annoyance to an obsessive character and finally he becomes a threat to the lives of every member of the Nelson family.

This is when the tension starts to mount and it does not stop. The camera does not keep still. It either moves agitatedly about, hovers ominously, or pans back and forth between two people conversing (a Scorsese trademark). Depth too is taken to an extreme. Objects zoom in and out without warning, and people walk right into the camera, distorting the fact that the audience is the audience and not a participant in the action.

Whenever there is a visual sense of calm, which is rare, there is something psychological at work, usually a result of Cady's manipulation, and ricochets off of each family member, passing amongst the family members with increasing violence. Scorsese relentlessly combines and dilates between the visual and the psychological without letting up. Forget all those stupid clichés about thrillers - "it'll have you at the edge of your seat," "a real nail-biter." This is a true thriller, to the point where it is both enthralling and disturbing. Perhaps the only problem one might have with the film is that it is too tense. It is the sort of action that excites the heart and unsettles the mind.



The Beauty and the Rapture (not).

by Steve Gravestock

Mimi Rogers's performances haven't exactly been noteworthy. Her most memorable roles have been as the hero's girlfriend. See, for example, *Someone to Watch Over Me*, *Street Smart*, or *Gung Ho*. After seeing Michael Tolkin's *The Rapture*, you may not consider her the best actress working today but this film does prove that she's talented. Rogers plays Sharon, a telephone operator, whose job is sheer drudgery. She tries to escape it through casual sexual encounters but this wears thin. On the verge of suicide, she finds religion.

Rogers gives Sharon an edginess and touching uncertainty which keep the film consistently interesting. Her Sharon isn't really that easy to like but it's very difficult not to empathize with her. Director Tolkin has wisely emphasized the actress's age, rather than her good looks, and this gives Rogers a maturity she hasn't had onscreen before. (Her crow's feet are spiritual battle scars.) Even after she finds God, though, Sharon doesn't strike you as particularly satisfied. She wants concrete proof. At the same time, neither Rogers's performance nor the movie blossom fully. Her character isn't developed enough and Michael Tolkin's treatment of the subject is half-hearted.

Michael Tolkin claims to be interested in religion and current spiritual dilemmas. The film examines the desire to believe and what happens when that desire dominates a person's life, but Tolkin is as literal about religion as Sharon. (The title refers to the belief that when Armageddon comes God will just reach down and transport the faithful to heaven.) The movie goes off the rails with a hideously obvious ending. This conclusion destroys all of the good will and psychological groundwork the film's built up. The film could only have been made by someone who is only "interested" in religion. At points, it seems as if Tolkin has been looking over his notes from World Issues class.

The dilemma that Sharon faces in the film was resolved in the Bible. It's dramatically acceptable if she doesn't know this; we've always wondered about the depth of her faith. However, it's not acceptable if we think Tolkin doesn't know this because it makes his interest in religion seem superficial.

Tolkin obscures things as well. He claims that the religion Sharon converts to is not identified, or rather, it's simply distinguished as Christian. He may be trying to broaden the film's scope but, in doing so, he ignores very important details. Each denomination, of

every religion, has very specific beliefs. That's why they exist. To not distinguish between them demonstrates a disastrous inability to truly address his subject. (Tolkin may also be shying away from controversy by not clearly identifying Sharon's religion. This doesn't work: everyone knows she joins a fundamentalist group.)

If Tolkin's not exactly a skilled social critic, he proves himself to be a very accomplished director. He shifts tone nicely and cleverly withholds things, thereby preventing the audience from feeling too secure about what's happening. His skill is surprising since this is his first attempt. (His previous credits include the script for the Christian Slater vehicle *Gleaming the Cube*; he also wrote

He's a commodities trader whose shipment of cocoa beans is stuck on a Sierra Leone dock because of a strike; she basically just lazes around. Jake was counting on auctioning the Moore statue to get them some cash. After its theft, they're stuck in their posh London hotel unable to leave because they can't pay their enormous bill. Some of the best scenes involve Jake trying to traverse the lobby without the manager seeing him. (He's bound to ask impolite questions like when are you going to pay up.) As cinematographer David Watkins shoots it, these scenes play like slaps through a fog of good taste and gentility.

The real objects of beauty are Jake and Tina, who have been sucking in rarified air for so long

you can't conceive of them doing anything else. They're amoral and not particularly swift, but nobody else in the movie is especially magnanimous. Besides you don't really mind how shallow they are. They belong so perfectly to their milieu it would be a shame to cause them too much discomfort or to see them separated from it.

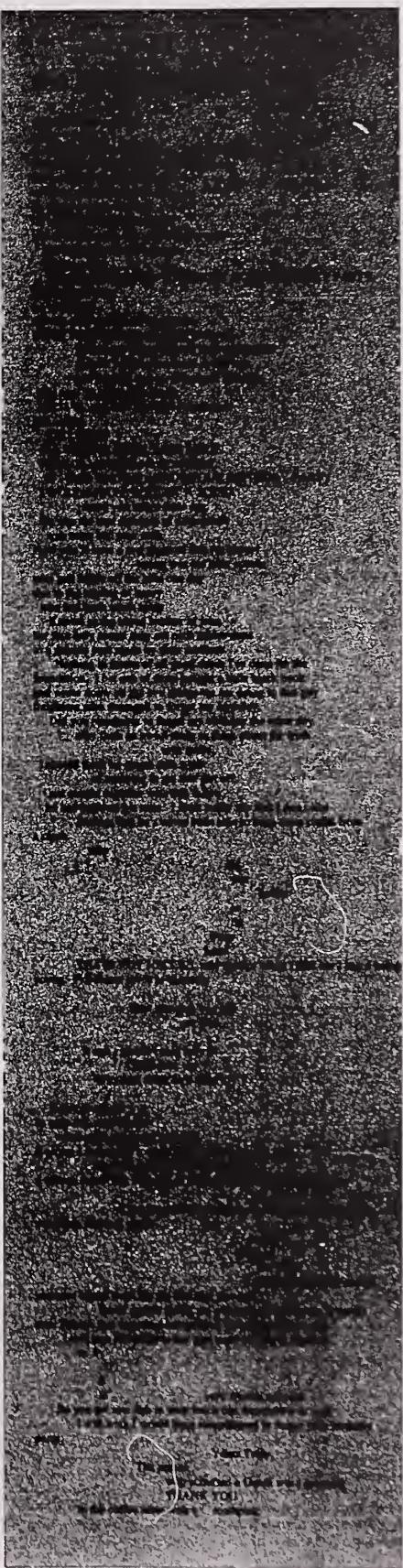
Their shallowness also places their beauty, and beauty in general, in relief. Beauty and taste are commodities in this film; they're about as mystical as Jake's cocoa beans. Well, almost.

Hogg has included a subplot about a deaf mute chambermaid who is entranced by the statue and steals it. Hogg seems to be suggesting either that real beauty is unknowable in this world or that those capable of getting it lack appreciation for it. I don't think this section is as good or interesting as the rest of the film. However, it is exquisitely handled and it's never made too obvious. It comes across in a suggestive, rather than a narrowly thematic, way.

Malkovich carries over the appealing prissiness he displayed in *Dangerous Liaisons* while Mac Dowell looks more comfortable here than she's ever been. As the hotel's assistant manager, Bill Patterson (*Comfort and Joy*) is a good dry foil. Lolita Davidovich (*Blaze*) turns in a solid performance as Tina's best friend.

Michael Lindsay-Hogg has a unique sensibility. He's like a Mike Leigh with sympathy or soul. Plus he's got just as much talent.

The ostensible object of beauty in the movie is a small Henry Moore statue. When it's stolen, Jake and Tina are put in a real bind.



Yo! Don't dis me whilst I'm viewing

by Jenny Friedland

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. It was ten o'clock on a Thursday night and *Knots Landing* had been preempted. Now, I know what you're wondering. You're wondering, why is she interested in such rot? And, more to the point, why is she still interested in such rot? By which I think you are referring indirectly to the fact that I am now a graduate and do not, therefore, have to watch mindless TV in order to avoid my schoolwork. It seems you find it somewhat odd that my passion for TV has not decreased significantly now that I no longer have twelve essays to write that were due last week. You were convinced that my inclination toward such shows as *Knots Landing* was less a preference and more an expression of stress (i.e. it's easier to turn on the TV than the computer). Now you don't know what to think. Does one's interest in TV decrease upon graduation? Or does one still find oneself unintentionally watching *Who's the Boss*?

Well, the answer is yes and no to the first question and absolutely not to the second. Shows like *Who's the Boss* and its ilk (*Growing Pains*, *Full House*, *Baby Talk* etc.) are absolutely worthless except insofar as they allow a glimpse of Tony Danza's or Scott Baio's butt. This in itself is not, of course, a valid excuse for watching. Back issues of *Tiger Beat* will serve just as well (and those, you can take to bed). Otherwise, the watching of these shows is like the sudden desire to wash the dishes... and the floor... and the dog - unenjoyable activities undertaken in order to avoid the unenjoyable task of writing essays. However, shows like *Knots Landing* (and other clever shows like *Seinfeld*, *Cheers*, *Northern Exposure*, *Quantum Leap*, *L.A. Law* and, of course, *Jeopardy*) retain their significance even without all those damn overdue essays.

Now if I can just intercept one concept at this juncture, allow me to mention that *Quantum Leap*, although clever enough, is really only worth watching because Dean Stockwell is in it. What a sexy guy. And not in any *Tiger Beat*. I've ever owned...

But while I find the quality of some shows to remain at the same lofty level as they did when I was an undergrad, I do detect a change in my willingness to record a show rather than sit there and watch at a prescribed hour. When I was in school, the only reason to record a program would have been so that I could keep slaving away at the computer. Notice the use of the conditional tense: if I had cared to keep working on my essays I would have recorded my favorite programs instead of watching them when they aired. And if my



Grandma had balls she'd be my Grandpa. I trust you get my meaning. Sometimes I would even pretend that my VCR was broken and that recording a program was never even an option. For me, *Knots Landing* etc. was always more important than an essay. It's good to have priorities in life. Of course, on Thursdays I'd have to confront the fact that my VCR did actually work. How else could I have watched both *Knots Landing* and *L.A. Law* which are most inconsiderately run at the same hour?

During my hundred years as an undergrad I found peace and tranquility in the fact that certain TV programs absolutely had to be watched. There was no *Who's the Boss*? type of guilt attached to watching *Knots Landing*. In fact, for me, some TV viewing was not unlike a trip to see grandma: totally guilt-free and in some sense even a

Good Thing to do. Now, however, I'm a pretty free and easy sort of chick (as I'm sure you've heard). Except for the occasional *Herald* deadline I find my life to be very unstressifying. And although I'll

never be able to rid myself wholly of guilt (I am, Jewish, after all), I have no overwhelming obligations - like essays to write - that baffle me when I'm trying to have fun and whisper spooky things in my ear like, "I think I hear Shakespeare calling you" while I'm trying to watch TV. As a result, I find that TV has taken on a whole new meaning in my life. Because it need no longer serve as an hour's refuge in an otherwise panic-ridden day, TV (like Grandma) has become an activity I pursue because it is Good and not because anything is better than writing an essay.

Nowadays, I don't mind taping a program instead of being there when it's aired and I find myself doing all sorts of things during prime time that essay writing angst could never have allowed. Of course, Thursdays are still a problem. If I can't be around to watch at least one of *Knots Landing* and *L.A. Law* then I am required to go up to my parents' house and hook up their VCR as well as my own. Quite frankly, however, I've yet to do anything on a Thursday that's more enjoyable than six hours straight of Good TV. Here's my recipe: Watch *Jeopardy* at 7:30. *The Simpsons* at 8:00, make dinner at 8:30 but be back by 9:00 for *Cheers*, watch *The Kids in the Hall* at 9:30, set up the VCR during a commercial, record *L.A. Law* at 10:00 and watch *Knots Landing*. If *SCTV* isn't on at 11:00 then watch the tape of *L.A. Law*. Then go to bed. Believe me you'll be spent. And don't forget to call your Grandma. Now I've got to go, *Northern Exposure* starts in twenty minutes.

AMERICA GENERALLY SUCKS

by Chris Hunter

I saw Rush in Hamilton. It was enjoyable and it brought back a lot of memories. They had a great sound system. It seemed to surround you. The drum solo was like being in an echo chamber. I hope they take that light show on the road. Parts of it, especially during "Subdivisions", were uniquely Canadian. And of course they played their old Canadian-Socialist standby, "Closer to the Heart." I hope the tour does well south of the border. Those Yanks could use a little Rush right now.

Speaking of Americans, what with the free-trade deal, and now our biggest trade deficit in fifteen years (remember, our main exports are STILL natural resources - that should tell you something. IT'S ALL MULRONEY'S FAULT), I must say I'm more disillusioned with them than usual. Maybe it's just the weather. I'm not the only one, am I? Didn't think so. It's just that so many Americans are stupid, y'know?

I remember roadtrippin' across America and we stopped for gas. This guy working there pumping says "Ontario? What state is that?" Not that I blame the guy. He's just a victim of the shitty American educational system.

David Byrne of the Talking

Heads said he went to school in Hamilton for a while, and when he went back to the States he was years ahead of his buddies.

Sure, it's easy for me to sit here in Canada, the country with the best track record for getting its students to University in the world, and put down the U.S.... Yeah, I'm sure is.

Anyway, part of their problem is capitalism. Each state decides how much money will go towards education in that state. I guess Michigan will have a ton of well educated students this year. Ha ha. George Bush won't even advance them emergency welfare. This train of thought makes me nervous because I start to feel all superior-like. I forgot that our society is going down the tubes too, because our social programs are in danger. A friend of mine suggested we cut off Medicare/welfare/pension/education until we pay off our debts, and then we can bring them back". Right. Like we'll just "put them on hold". And then bring them back. Things can't get better without them. We've got to protect our gains, not give them up.

I spent a lot of time in the U.S.A. and don't get me wrong, I love it. You can't beat the cheap beer in N'Awlins: two for ninety-nine cents (of course it's 3.2 Old

Milwaukee, though), and of course there's always the... uh... the... well I love it anyway. Maybe it's because I really love some of the American people. The good ones have kind hearts. I lucked out and met all the people who would buy me drinks, chauffeur me around, write me letters and I miss them all. They still have some beautiful natural parks left, too...

I remember visiting a logging town in Oregon, and they had this crude caricature of a hippy in a stetson on the cash register at the 7-11: "save the economy, cook an environmentalist." These poor townspeople weren't to blame, any more than those dirt poor townspeople weren't to blame, any more than those dirt-poor slabs in South America who are hacking down the trees in the rainforest to feed their twelve starving children are. They're victims of a fucked up economy, and they've got to fuck up the environment to survive. So here's the issue: money. Money or forest. Well, what're we gonna do when there are no forests left? We'll have to find these people jobs then. So why wait? Can we afford to? "The men who hold high places, must be the ones who start, to mold a new reality, closer to the heart." But, sadly, the men who hold high places never do.



What's Happening at Innis in the New Year

PUB
at the
HANGAR
January 24th

for more
info call
us at
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rm 116

the only as
FORMAL
as you want
MARCH 7th

plus

YUK-YUKS NIGHT

Environmental Forum

MORE SPORTS

ODIN AND WARREN'S

by Odin and Warren

It was Pink Floyd meets Iron Maiden.

I must start off this return of the metal phile with a harsh confession. The following is not a tale for the studded at heart, so therefore be advised: go through a full character analysis before you read on.

The time and place is but a blur to me. At some point over the summer it was struck down with the notion that Led Zeppelin was not, and is not, the be all and the end to music. After a good many years of worshipping the grounds that Robert Plant screeched on and the stages Jimmy Page sweat upon - a band has come to the foreground shattering all previous concepts of ultimate tunes.

Who would have the energy, power and political persuasion to turn a guy with LED ZEP emblazoned on his U of T jacket to another kind of music, one might ask? Well seven simple letters come to mind R-A-M-O-N-E-S.

My greatest fear (as of late) has been the concept of resurrecting the metal phile, with the deep knowledge that my band and hence music of choice no longer exists in this genre of music. My salvation from this dilemma came while mulling over the latest release from Motorhead. I was deep into the album in a solemn mood, when a track came on which changed my life. (Well not really but it made things simpler anyway.) The title of the song was none other than those same seven letters - yes - R-A-M-O-N-E-S. Yes, it was Lemmy, god of metal, studs, leather and warts offering me my salvation, with a tribute to the fab four (Joey, Thayne, Marky, and C.J.) My life is currently at ease. I feel I may contribute in my own special way to the *Herald* with a guilt-free conscience, much to the reader's pleasure, I'm sure.

On to more current issues. For starters, how about a review of the Queensryche concert? It was, after all, a case of "Hey, it's 8:00pm, how about checking out this band in half an hour?" When one lives in Scarborough the half an hour span seems like a lifetime, but hey, who is going to pass up an offer to see a band of current renown for free? "Not I," said the Cat.

Minus the thirty dollars economic pressure set on most concert victims these days, I was able to view the band with an open heart and soul (granted, my running shoes do have holes in them, but that's beside the point). The major phrase of the evening was "intelligent metal". I realize that at any other point in time, this would be considered a harsh oxymoron, but for this evening, it fit.

Queensryche has been around for some time now (mid-eighties) but only since their latest effort have they received much public recognition. Last time I had the opportunity of being confused by this band was when they opened up for Ozzy in '87, and believe me, a lot has changed since then, other than their popularity.

The horrendous and simply frightful glam of yesteryear was gone and in its place a form of progressive metal, the likes of which have never been witnessed before by a metal crowd. (Well, myself anyway.) This time a round I was left thinking "artistic metal". It was Pink Floyd meets Iron Maiden and no, it certainly was not boring! Just different almost refreshing. (How's that for cliches?)

There only remnants of glam passed by in the silver stars and fringes of the lead guitar's leather pants. Otherwise the stage was bare, allowing one to see all members of the band at all times, without effigies of dead people swaying in the breeze like many wanna-be bands of today.

The show also included an appreciable use of video, which was not tasteless in the least, in fact it strengthened the impact of the songs and filled in the lyrical parts which were unintelligible.

The Gardens crowd was fairly laid back for a metal show, but the mood fit. New Orchestra come to mind. Yeah it was a really cool show. Check 'em out.

Mentioning Ozzy - here is a contribution from the other better half of the old metal column Mr. Warren Fick. Venting his radical side in the adverse conservatism of teacher's college, (at the U of T faculty of Ed. No doubt). Anyway, read on. And consider the fact that this man may one day be teaching your kids.

Ozzy: Crazy, Cute or Cutting Edge?

Okay. Here's a good paradigm for you. In the always handy Roget's college thesaurus the word "cute" is followed by the word "cutting" and often times over my many years as a Rock and Roller I have been incapable of deciding if Ozzy Osbourne is one or the other.

His new album *No More Tears* is yet another example of this dilemma. For starters how can you not want to hug a man whose words often (to borrow from Huey Lewis) say it's "Hip to be crazy."

To be crazy or not to be crazy is a real issue for Ozzy - moreover to not be crazy is a fate worse than death, as documented on this album puts you on the "Road to Nowhere". In Ozzy's opinion, to be crazy at least gives you some sort of direction in life.

At times, it even seems as if he is pointing out to all of those party crazy third and fourth year people with no goals or direction in life, that they have got it all wrong. Their behaviour is in fact the correct direction: they just need to practice a bit more.

Okay. Enough. Skin-

ner type observations, but the overwhelming impression one gets from this album (only available on cassette and CD) is Ozzy's not only double, but triple entendre in every song. This madman wants not only to be cute and crazy, but cutting edge as well. And you know what? It almost works. On *No More Tears*, Ozzy once again portrays how he is a truly tragic figure for his laments on many occasions how he doesn't want to "change the world", but then goes right back to preaching how great it is to be cute, crazy and on the cutting edge.

As has been Ozzy's tradition, *No More Tears* is full of cute little studio gimmicks. For example, slurred vocals, back ward masking and great titles such as "Zombie Stomp", "S.I.N." and "Hellraiser".

Indeed, he even goes one step farther on this album. Most of it is co-written with the cutest or should I say, the most adorable man in show business - Lemmy Kilmister. The cuteness is in fact a little too much for an Ozzy fanatic like myself who tolerated Ozzy dressing up as what many considered to be an undersized Alaskan Malamute for perhaps his most endearing album yet "Bark At The Moon" (He was supposed to look like a

werewolf). However, I can live with this.

On the crazy side of things Ozzy simply prefers the more subtle approach of simply using the word itself at least twice in every verse. I guess that's one of the problems with having written "Crazy Train" all those years ago with his first incarnation of the *Blizzard of Oz* and having it go on to become an anthem for a generation of kids who grew up at roller rinks.

The ever resourceful Ozzy does, however, utilize a strange mixture of other words that surround "crazy" which really work and that's what makes this album rock. The cutting edge of the album, however, is where I draw the line. The edge in question here is not what you might expect from the Godfather of Satanic Rock. Indeed, it's something you might expect from the last Haywire album and that is Ozzy's use of the most overexposed and generic lyric ever conceived. "It's the same old desire/ Crazy Train Crazy Train/ Burning like fire/ Crazy Train Crazy Train/ Don't you ever take my name in vain" Ooooh. It even hurts to transcribe it for you faithful readers.

I know this is beginning to sound a bit like a Les Nessman editorial, but that's just how I see it, folks. I love the cute and crazy Ozzy, but when he adds this cutting-fingernails-on-a-chalkboard-edge to his sound I am forced to reconsider the Ozzy tattoo I got on my posterior way back in grade nine.

I've taken a lot of crap for you over these many years, Ozzy, and let me just tell you, it hurts to have you let me down like this. I know the good Lord tested Job in much the same way, but I have my doubts if I too can persevere.

To sum up, this album is classic Ozzy. It reflects a man who abandoned the real world long ago for something better. I'd say he's found it, but he simply slips every once in a while, just like Jim Baker or Elijah Mohammed. Indeed, I feel that his message still persists; a message that I was entrusted to spread - way back in grade nine. My faith is waning a little, but my aim remains true. Perhaps Odin and I can once again set all of those confused individuals on the correct path towards rock and roll salvation. Or is that damnation?

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A REVOLUTION OF ALL BALLAS

by Michael Blitz

eat; I know I said I wasn't gonna write any more stuff about music, but fuck, Trevor Ball's music reviews bummed me out. I don't know the guy, so I don't want to put him down, but in my obviously subjective view, the stuff he's reviewing has about as much vitality and validity as the Piltdown Man. Fuck Van Halen and their meaningless, warmed-over but not really defrosted parodies of life. Fuck most big acts, as a matter of fact. I grew up seeing some of the best music this genre called "rock" has ever produced by people who actually - gasp - gave a damn. When Eddie does a Stevie Ray Vaughan, I'll smile, but until then get this major-label, major-attitude, megashow bullshit out of my face.

Anyway, I was in the Record Peddler a while back and noticed a tape by a band called Scherzo. I'd never heard of them, but they were on Lookout Records, the label that brought out Operation Ivy, Green Day, Neurosis and lots more—a very cool label. So I took a chance, and I'm glad I did.

The tape—called *Suffering and Joy*—ain't the most original ever made—it's strongly in the Bad Religion, San Francisco style of articulate² melodic punk/hardcore—but that field is by no means sucked dry yet. There are some cranking tunes here—"Promise Me," "Hope," "Consider," "Resignation"—and an overall anemic, noncynical outlook. Like a mellow, smarter, straightedge band, they believe in fighting the Deathkultur, and part of that means not letting its emotional chains of despair and cynicism get fastened on you. The only drag is that their drummer kind of sucks, and this takes away from the overall energy level. Still, it cooks, and it'll put a smile on your face, a song in your heart, and restore your conviction that the Good Fight is indeed worth fighting.

Also at the Peddler, picked up *Somery*, SST Records' best-of of the Descendants. Actually, this is less of a best-of than an overview. The Descendants could get pretty stupidly immature at times, and that side of them—"Enjoy," "Perverse"—is represented. Then again, there's a great selection of their pop and punk and general upbeat weirdness. They mastered the art of aggressive guitar pop, and this collection shows it off. The only track it's really missing is the shimmeringly beautiful "Koren" from *I Don't Wanna Grow Up*.

And more on the Descendants: A few years back they turned into All. Now they've gotten back together with their old bass player, Tony Lombardo, to record a selection of his songs on *Tonyall*. Unfortunately, his lyrics are immature sexist bullshit, and his singing is almost worse. Most of

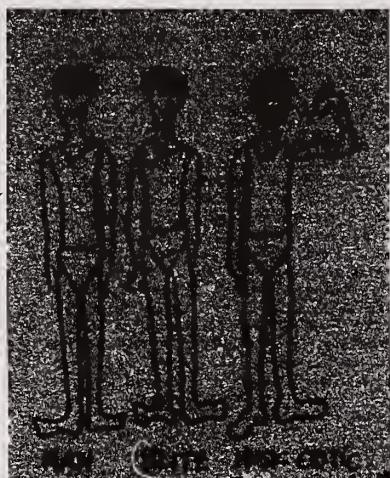
the melodies and riffs are good, and All has never yet been less than great as musicians—including Lombardo's basslines—but can't say that completely makes up for the lyrics and Lombardo's singing. Too bad.

Chaos: the Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchy which—though it wears to the cloak of prose—is sheer revolutionary poetry. Don't look to it for literal meaning: let yourself be swallowed in its go-for-broke

I don't know how much any of you will get into this, but if Crowley, Wilson, Blake, Nietzsche or Khayyam touch anything in you—or if you just want to expand your idea of what's possible—check it out. You can get it at Seeker's Books, on Bloor.

valid criticisms of the Dead, but the anti-Dead dogmatists haven't hit as many of them, preferring instead to recite emptyheaded dithers. That's your right, but that right does not imply any obligation on my part to respect you. I say, speaking from the musical appreciation and knowledge given above, that the Dead are a completely valid, completely original (in a musical sense: that is, in the sense of pushing a tradition) and potentially revolutionary musical force. Their music has some of the best-articulated aesthetic premises I've ever encountered, and their aesthetics is a life-praising and life-affirming one. If you want to argue or discuss, great, but if you want to bubble ignorantly, don't waste my time, okay?

Wheew. Having said that, I have to admit that the Garcia Band album ain't tall that hot. It's good—the band is there and even kicks relatively large amounts of ass, and Garcia's playing is good, although more inclined to self-indulgence than when he's with the Dead, but his vocals just ain't strong enough to carry the whole thing, and too many of the songs sound the same—a sort of arena-folk feel. Garcia wasn't meant to play with a normal band, but I don't think he realizes this—the album is his attempt to do plain ol' rockin' folk, and he doesn't completely succeed. It's fun, but not essential. *Buy Without a Net* instead. Bye.



Fugazi put out a new album, *Steady Diet of Nothing*, and while I have to admit that it grooves heavily, and as much as I admire the band, it doesn't reach the messianic heights of their previous album, *Repeater*. Fugazi's approach to music is—although not completely unique—fascinating, and their dedication shows through in both vocals and playing, and this album is really good in and of itself, but if you've got only enough cash for one album, make it *Repeater*. (Then buy this when you get your paycheck.)

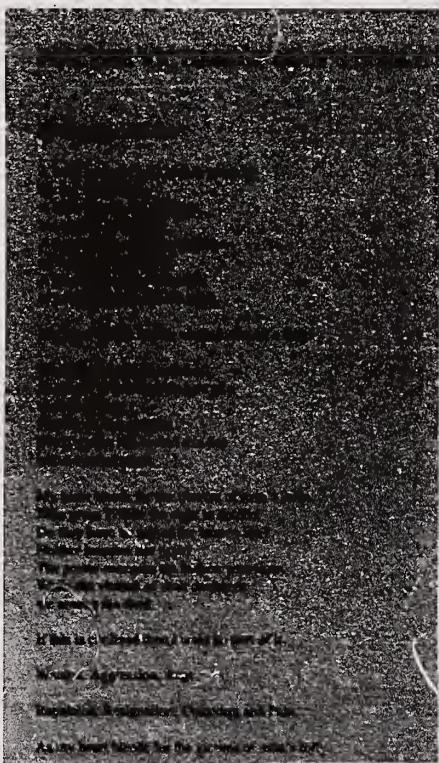
While I remember, should mention that there was a band night at Innis Nov. 23, with Blue Shift, A Guy Called Patrick, Head (Head Injury? - ed.) and Bound for Glory, all Innis bands and reasonably proud of that. People showed up, hung out and grooved. It was a production of the Reality Liberation Front—“the RLF is your friend!”

Onward, to—a first for me: hope it grooves you—a book review, namely Hakim Bey's *Temporary Autonomous Zone* (TAZ). Hakim is a fairly diehard anarchist, but not at all a political one—he belongs more to the tradition of mystical anarchism, anarchism mixed up with surrealism, guerrilla ontology. He is, by my and certainly most people's standards, extremely weird. He is also extremely angry, extremely funny, and extremely smart, like a cross between Nietzsche and Aleister Crowley. *TAZ* is divided into three parts. The first is a reprinting of his

stream of mystical/subconscious imagery.

The second consists of the "communiques of the Association for Ontological Anarchy," fairly terse and down-to-earth (for Bey) short articles on issues from the avant-garde ("the purveyors of pointless gloom"), psychic paleolithism ("Just because the A.O.A. talks about 'Paleolithism' all the time, don't get the idea we intend to bomb ourselves back to the Stone Age") and other burning issues for the practising surrealist anarchist.

The third is the real meat—artichoke for the vegetarians, I guess—of the book, "The Temporary Autonomous Zone," wherein Bey argues that the true goal of any anarchist revolutionary should not be permanence or the establishment of any sort of anarchist "state"—but rather, the goal of revolutionary activity lies in the freedom of the moment of activity itself: turn means to ends and voyage to destinations, he argues, and we can live in freedom. Thus the "Temporary": he envisions guerrilla raids against the statist mindset. Note the word "mindset"—as he says "confrontations will only result in dangerous and ugly spasms of violence by the emptyheaded shit-for-brains who've inherited the keys to all the armories and prisons." Look: the primary advantage of repression is an increased capacity for violent action—why give them the advantage of tactics that they practically invented? As Mario Savio said, "We have only one weapon: the power to blow minds."



MUSIC

WILD
STRAWBERRIES:
Grace

by John Anderson



Wild Strawberries have just released a new cassette and CD, called *Grace*, available at those big record stores. They had a release party on October 30, with the Divinies opening for them. A lot of people turned out, and the Strawberries were at their most energetic. A different drummer made their sound more powerful, and their playing was assured. The audience loved it, especially when Ken, Roberta and Braz came out for an encore and played a song, "Picnic", without drums or bass.

The new cassette reflects this stronger sound in the writing and the guitar work. The drums are not as loud as I would like them to be, but the sound as a whole is more confident than that of their first cassette, *Carving Wooden Spectacles*. Roberta's singing is also more confident and more colourful. The band has found a sound where they are most comfortable and expressive. The lyrics are more accessible than before, as well as more hardened. "I think I met you at Graceland National! I was the one torching the bike! Or maybe it was the abattoir! I was the one with the knife", sings Roberta in the title song. The material is even more emotionally charged than on the first cassette, for example, "You rendered me conscious! You cut my innocent face... I just want to kick you till you cry. I loved I really loved you", from "I Don't Want To Think About It". The only big disappointment I have with this new release is that Ken hardly sings, and one of the best things about the band was their beautiful vocal harmonies. They are sadly missing from this cassette. Their lack, however, does not prevent me from enjoying *Grace*. With twelve tracks, this cassette is definitely worth it, if you like their mellow, thinking person's pop.

Damn Right, Buddy's Got Them Blues

RecordReviews

by Trevor Balla

Buddy Guy - *Damn Right, I've Got the Blues*

The new album by Buddy Guy finally catches the full essences of his wonderful live performance, something his previous albums have lacked, with the exception of *Stone Crazy*.

The electricity is captured on most of the tracks, namely "Mustang Sally," "Where Is the Next One Coming From," and "Let Me Love You Baby." Guy, with his soulful vocals, reaches spiritual heights on "There Is Something On Your Mind," "Black Night," and "Five Long Years." The key to this album is the great production, something his previous albums have lacked. It is amazing what a little financial backing can do for an artist. Also, help from Clapton, Beck, and Knopfler isn't that bad.

Right now, we are in a blues revival, and Buddy Guy is the man to lead it all the way to the top of the charts.

Favourite cut: "Five Long Years"
Rating: A

Living Colour - *Biscuits*

Usually when an artist releases an EP, it is just a bunch of remixed songs used to make a fast buck. That isn't the case with the 6 song EP *Biscuits* from Living Colour.

Included on this tape are decent remakes of BB's "Talkin' Loud and Saying' Nothing," Hendrix's "Burning of the Midnight Lamp," and a soulful version of Al Green's "Love and Happiness." Also are live versions of previous hits "Desperate People" and "Memories Can't Wait." The final song on the EP is "Money Talks," which has a wild solo by Reid.

All in all, it may not be a whole album, but the material is well worth it.

Favourite Cut: "Love and Happiness"
Rating: B+

Skid Row - *Slave to the Grind*

With the pop success of their debut album, Skid Row wanted to break out of their mainstream status and hit hard with a straight-up heavy metal attack. They have passed with flying colours with their new album, *Slave to the Grind*.

Led by the twin guitar attack of Dave "The Snake" Sabo and Scotti Hill, the album starts off with three hard rockers in a row, "Monkey Business," "Slave to the Grind," and "The Threat." This kick-ass attitude continues throughout the whole album, with the exception of a few ballads, namely "Quicksand Jesus" and "Wasted Time."

Don't expect a lot of tunes like "18 and Life." The new album by Skid Row is in your face, twin-guitar blazing heavy metal.

Favourite Cut: "Mudkicker"
Rating: A-

Prince and the New Power Generation - *Diamonds and Pearls*

It seems to me that the only reason Prince hooked up with the N.P.G. is that he wants to get back to the top of the charts as he did with the Revolution in the mid-eighties. What it comes down to is that the record company is not satisfied with Prince's commercial status in the late-eighties, even though he has created two of his best albums, *Sign 'O' The Times* and *Bridge*. Hence, we have his new release *Diamonds and Pearls*.

Instead of creating musical trends, Prince follows them. The tracks "Daddy Pop," "Jughead," and "Push" exemplify this point, with Prince having to use rap to gain commercial success. However, there are some classic Prince song such as "Thunder," "Cream," and "Instatable." But the real treats on the album are "Willing and Able," "Honey Don't Marry 2 Night," and the sensual "Get Off."

It was very disappointing to see such a diverse and original artist give into conformity for commercial success.

Favourite cut: "Get Off"
Rating: B-

Phallic
Skulls

Flourish

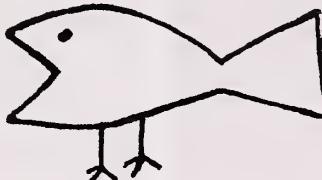
by Lester J. Jerkoff

The Phallic Skulls' new album *Saliva Motorway* comes as a pleasant surprise after their pseudo-subgenius hyper-macho ego trip, *I Just Want You For Your Mind*. The lead vocalist Casava has expanded her range to one octave, a great advance from her guttural groaning and screeching on the last album. She still has yet to sing lyrics however and seems to be following in the footsteps of her idol/goddess/mentor Liz Frazer of the ethereally erudite Cocteau Twins.

The album, all in all, is somewhat reminiscent of early *Novice Providence* in its use of continual drum pounding and earsplitting bass riffs, but it lacks *Novice's* whimsical lyrics and, of course, the ever-humorous *Gas Gag*. But this doesn't mean that *Saliva Motorway* isn't good stuff. The single, "Mud Blood," is the Skulls' best ballad to date, a poignant and moving examination of what motivates young thugs to murder their grandmothers. "Conning" a blood-stirring tour-de-force spanning time and place which chronicles the rivalry between mother and daughter.

Despite the fine quality of the Skulls' new album, the question which continually plagues the band still remains, to what? Why are four women writing and performing songs which some critics claim are misogynistic in an age of so-called female self-awareness and affirmative action? I maintain that they are a reaction against the radical lesbo-separatist-feminist pseudo-religious Marxists who are corroding our traditional Euro-male-centred Christian values and turning our young people into undergraduates and dope addicts. Way to go Skulls!

Next Issue: *Novice Providence*, a retrospective.



A NARROW-MINDED BIGOT BECOMING A BROAD-MINDED ASSHOLE

LJ



VERY
WET
LOUNGE

Once you have cut out the CIUT 89.5FM schedule below, here are a few hints as to what you can do with it:
-read it
-look at it
-worship it
-write obscene things on it
-wipe your bum with it
-attach it to your fridge, or a wall in your room, or your dog. Keep it handy and check it out. Virtually any and all musical tastes will be met and broadened. You'll hear stuff you've NEVER heard of. That applies to spoken-word too. Not only does CIUT have the most prime-time feminist radio shows, amongst many others, but as well, shows like Groundswell, Caffeine Free and Undercurrents tell you what the rest of the media world doesn't, or are afraid to.

Oh yeah. If you're a U of T student, you've already paid \$5 into the station. We thank you. So why not find out where your money went. And of course, get involved. By the way, I do have a radio show. It is unlisted because it lies beyond the normal space/time continuum wave-length dimension your radio exists in. It will nonetheless appear, any day, any time, usually unannounced, once every eclipse. The same will apply to my Herald articles, as I am departing on a sabbatical to the gamma valleys of Venus. See you next equinox.

The E N V I R O N M E N T

GREENPEACE PHONE-O-RAMA

by Tracy Bohan

This summer, faced with the much-trumpeted student job shortage, I scanned the classifieds week after week and soon grew familiar with one in NOW magazine: "Greenpeace seeks concerned activist for public outreach and fundraising telephone campaigns". I had attended a few rallies and signed some petitions, but compared to the media image of burly, bearded Greenpeace activists confronting club-wielding seal hunters and Russian whaling ships, doubted my status as an environmental activist. Still, the ad ran tirelessly and by mid-June it was no longer intimidating but vaguely pathetic. Friends with canvassing experience tried to dissuade me with dire warnings of emotional scarring and extinguished faith in human kindness. Ex-canvassers are a powerfully cynical lot, but blythely convinced of the thickness of my skin and two weeks behind in rent, I gamely visited the Greenpeace office on Spadina Avenue. After a brief interview I was hired. I was encouraged to borrow from the offices library and shown an introductory video about Greenpeace's origins and most important campaigns. The video's slick dramatic soundtrack, script and editing begged a comparison to a third rate Hollywood adventure flick. On the other hand, the reading material I selected was impressive and the people in the office were sincere, and so began my career as a canvasser.

The first lesson I learned about canvassing is the great social divide between door and phone

canvassers. Door-to-door canvassers, the true foot soldiers of the movement, blitz entire neighbourhoods, coming up against people who think that Greenpeace is a lawn care service or own shares in Dow chemical. They are in general a younger, bolder and much better tanned breed than the phone canvasser, who only deals with the approximately 400,000 Canadians who have already joined Greenpeace. This brings with it its own brand of adventure however.

Here is an example of a typical evening from the weeks that followed:

- The scourge of all phone canvassers - answering machines. At first I would listen numbly to a few seconds of each message, but soon I began hanging up at the first whiff of the tape. As an occasional exercise I would listen to an entire message for signs of wit and/or originality. Most often I am disappointed.

- An elderly male voice: "You people are too radical." The eco-fascist charge.

- An exhausted female voice: "I'm tired of being harrassed by you people." The thorn-in-my-side charge. I am almost sympathetic.

- More answering machines.
- Adolescent male voice: "Greenpeace? You want to speak to my dad? Cool!" Dad basking in his new found hipness in the eyes of his son, makes a donation.

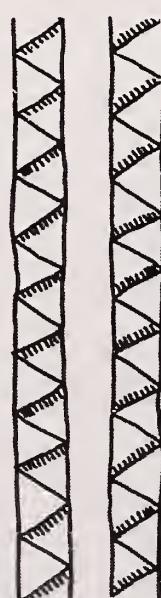
- "Hi. My name's Tracy. I'm calling from Greenpeace..."
CLICK. It happens. At least once a night.

Nanaimo tells me that she's eighty-six and a member of "Grannies for the Environment". I spend five long-distance minutes with her and even though she can't give any money, she makes me feel better than my last one hundred dollar donation. I hang up the phone with renewed faith.

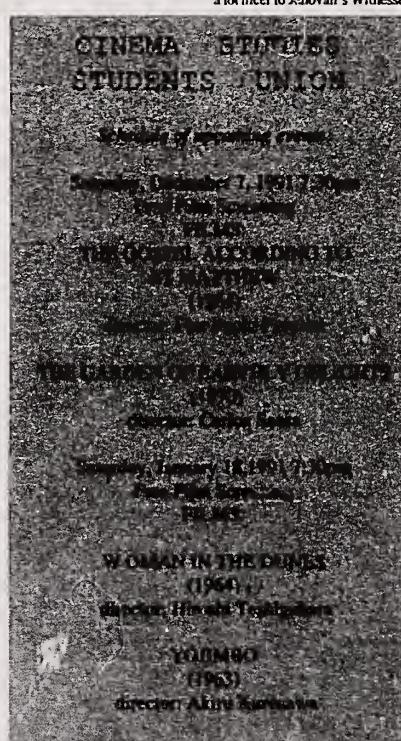
Everyone has favourite canvassing war stories which are exchanged at the nearby pub with all the relish and bravado of vets at the local Legion. There are a lot of variations on these rude, crude and downright nasty. Celebrity canvassing is always fun - my favourite story is from Dave who canvassed a pompous and self-righteous Moses Znaimer at his door.

After months of exposed almost solely to the most beaurocratic unpleasant aspect of any non profit organization, one can lose sight of the organization's larger, non-financial goals. And it is sometimes hard to swallow some of the attitudes I encounter from Greenpeace's largely white, middle-class membership when we're discussing issues such as James Bay II. Native Rights are not as easy to sell as seals and dolphins. Greenpeace does consistently address issues of worker's rights, First Nations land claims and the impact of our industrial waste on the disenfranchised communities (here and around the world) in which it is dumped. Unfortunately, these are not so easily picked by the TV news. As my canvassing days draw to a close (at five months, I am way past the average retirement age of about ten weeks) I am not necessarily wiser or wealthier I am a lot wiser (I should be Wiser) and

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Penetrating the Anal Myth

Slonim

Sex is a major business in our society. Images of big busted blondes are used to sell everything from beer to soap. As money and sex become more closely linked, censorship slackens its tight grip on what we are allowed to see. What we are seeing is not sex, but a tasteless watered down substitute. We live in a world where a photo of a woman, clad in a skimpy bikini, sitting on the hood of a sportscar is society's idea of sexy. Big Business is all for benign sexuality (aka Pretty Woman) but it draws the line at any genuine display of desire. We are quick to censor any real portrait of sexuality, labelling it obscene, pornographic and filthy.

This article, however, concerns the portrayal of anal sex in classic twentieth century literature. In essence a study of a current taboo. (You probably think I've spread myself to thin.)

Anal sex has a negative stigma attached to it. Sodomy is seen as a cold, painful brutal form of sex. An aggressive threatening man degrades his victim.

Freud wrote that the anal zone is a normal erogenous area. Children from a young age are taught that the anus is a bad place. We then begin to repress the excitement that anal stimulation provides. Therefore the anus is both good and bad. Good in the sense that it is a source of extreme sexual excitement. And bad, in the sense that it is a social taboo to enjoy this excitement.

Norman Mailer's novel *An American Dream* brutally depicts anal sex between a man and a woman. He establishes it as a dirty, desperate act.

I had a desire suddenly to skip the sea and mine the earth, a pure prong of desire to hugger, there was conni hard-packed evil in that butt, that I knew. But she resisted, she spoke for the first time, "Not there! Verboten!"

There is no sexuality in this act, it is an animalistic evil ritual. Mailer twists the narrative, the man begins to switch from the anus to the vagina. In his own words he strokes once in the house of the devil and then in the house of the lord. There is a raw intense desire that is felt by both of the people involved. "Ja." She shook her head. "No, no," she went on. "Ja, don't stop, ja." She wants to be sodomized, to be degraded. To rashly label Mailer as a misogynist is a mistake. His intent is to show humanity in its most primitive desperate form. To him anal sex is the expression of this desperate need to feel something. It should not be forgotten that the two parties involved are enjoying themselves. They are engaging in the "Verboten".

Henry Miller's *Sexus* also explores anal sex between a man and a woman. Unlike *An American Dream*, here the woman is the aggressor.

The next moment she was on her hands and knees, begging me to give it to her anyway. I got behind her on all fours; she reached her hand under and grabbing my cock she slipped it in... She gave a little groan of pain and pleasure mixed. "It's gotten bigger," she said, squirming her ass around. "Put it in again all the way... go ahead, I don't care if it hurts," and with that she backed up on me with a wild lurch.

Again the sex is a display of naked desire. Miller doesn't sanitize the pain involved in the act. The sex is both exciting and nauseating. She is feeling both pain and pleasure. As in Mailer's book, anal sex is a desperate act, the woman must have a cock inside her. "Do it, do it," she begged, "or I'll go mad!"

No discussion of sodomy would be complete without a mention of William S. Burroughs. Actually, to be more precise, no discussion of taboos would be complete without the mention of William S. Burroughs. In his seedy hallucinogenic novel *Naked Lunch* he savagely creates a picture of sodomy between three children. Two boys and a girl wearing a strap on dildo bugger each other. But Burroughs goes even further into the taboo. The youngest of the three, called Johnny, is hung by the other two children involved. They continue to have sex with Johnny's corpse.

Mark and Johnny sit facing each other in a vibrating chair. Johnny impaled on Mark's cock.

"All set, Johnny?"

"Turn it on."

His face swells with blood... Mark reaches up with one like movement and snaps Johnny's neck... sound like a stick broke in a wet towel. A shudder runs down Johnny's body...

Before you rush out to burn all the copies of *Naked Lunch* you can find, here is a quote from *Newsweek's* review of the book. "A masterpiece. A cry from hell, a brutal, terrifying, and savagely funny book..." The sex in Burroughs is shocking. It is fiercely evil. Burroughs's characters are doing whatever they want to. Whether there is enjoyment in it or not is of no consequence.

In all three of these books anal sex is dirty. The writers are not trying to teach a didactic lesson about not having anal intercourse. They see that this taboo as the most naked display of human sexuality. A primitive symbol for what is at the core of being. Because of its ugliness we are scared off its power. We resist the temptations of the body. Preferring to believe in a safe watered down version of sexuality instead.

CAT O ONE TAIL

by Laura Petrie

I recently attended a fetish party. Officially, it was a Hallowe'en party because of the date, but this group meets on occasion and dresses as their fantasies dictates. The costumes on this particular night were interesting and inventive. Our host was dressed as Cleopatra, with a mantle of blue felt and a bedsheet wrapped tightly around him that constricted walking. He wore the appropriate black wig and had framed his eyes artfully with Egyptian hieroglyphics. His girlfriend was Venus as inspired by Botticelli, except for her raven tresses. I suppose she was the hostess, but her intense passivity seemed to render her rather useless in the role and she spent much time with her arms wrapped around her knees. When the door opened and let in the cold November air, she shivered visibly, trying to keep her seashell-painted breasts warm.

In the living room, they had a rack with handcuffs that seemed somewhat clinical and innocuous. No one volunteered or even coerced someone else to try it. A pornographic video played on the TV without sound and on a wavy screen. A blonde woman with a mid-seventies shag haircut was in the midst of a blowjob to a torso. The beneficiary seemed not to have a head, just an erect penis. The other guests sat in a circle in more

or less appropriate dress, and basically oblivious to the video. A placid young man sat idly in a black satin teddy. Someone else wore the well-fitting garb of an 18th century musketeer or something like that. He had refused my suggestion to demonstrate the rack. A woman wore a black slip with a wide skirt and had three

nerds in high school who, while they salivated over the Playmate of the Month like all the other guys, they would point to saucious parts and refer to them by their scientific anatomical names.

I didn't go there looking for trouble or anything kinky (except in a voyeuristic sense), but if their self-image includes this "hidden dimension," I can only say that they came off as being rather predictable and conventional. This disappointment reminds me of a story an old boyfriend told me about his parents' curiosity about marijuana. This occurred when he was a toddler and he recalled how he and his sister were bundled into their Dr. Dentons a little earlier one night and their parents scampered off to the sanctuary of the den to smoke up. Nothing - virtually nothing happened - no mind expansion, no sightings of God or any celestial being (this was the early seventies), or any form of enlightenment. Over the years, they spoke so vehemently of their disappointment that when their children reached those vulnerable ages through adolescence, there was no dread of wayward experimentation: the kids were too bored with the whole concept (besides, it was the eighties by that time and they were more interested in making money). Nothing like a shattered mystery to quell curiosity.

Feel the Goddess, touch the Dao: A how-to

Stop looking at the ground, and other people so much. We spend so much of our lives looking at the sidewalk, that we hardly bother to watch the sky. When you do eventually look up, it's breathtaking, but trust me, it **ALWAYS IS**. I'm not suggesting that you walk about smashing into poles and people as you gaze at the heavens, but just stop (you're really not going anywhere anyway) and appreciate infinity.

We are all brothers and sisters. For goodness sake, figure it out. Feel it. Know it. Now, express it. Say hello to strangers as you walk down the street. Stop and shake their hand. Don't only kiss friends when you meet them, hug them too. Show this to others. Please don't do this because I tell you to. Do it because you feel like it. If you don't, don't. Truth. People often feel threatened by others, by the cold looks in their eyes. Find out what's behind them. You can't regret. If you feel like smiling, dancing or just singing, do it. It's a new kind of neighbourhood. Your world will change. It will become a brighter place. For your world is all within the perceptions of your mind. Those around you will be infected by this happiness and they'll feel good too. And thus the without of your mind will as well change. Open yourself to others and turn the other cheek.

Infuse the soul back into your life. Infuse the soul back into your life. Infuse the soul back into your life.

Establish balance within and feel it without. And don't let the CIA push you around. Ya.

于德王

Sometimes I'm Stupid

"Pieces of the night are still stuck to my hair."

- Kickboy Face

by Mole

On Mondays last year I worked until midnight in Scarborough. An ex-employee named Jen called me at work once in a while to inform me of her love life. She was absolutely lustful, and she slept over once in a while. I never touched her, however. She would stick like velcro to any man who paid too much attention to her, even me.

It was November. I had just finished my shift when she called. "Mole, we're picking you up in ten minutes."

"Who?" I ventured. "Is we?"

"Me and my new fiance," she replied and hung up.

I stood by the staff entrance and smoked a cigarette. I was tired and depressed and wanted my bed. But I was bored, and Jen's boyfriends were usually interesting, to say the least. When the blue Trans-Am pulled up, Jen got out and let me in the back seat. She had a mischievous grin on her face.

"Mole, this is Jonah," she said as we turned onto Eglinton. I said hello. So did she. Jen winked at me for approval. I smiled politely.

Jonah was the ideal Spartan. Stomach like a washboard, blue eyes, powerful biceps, thighs like Hercules and no brains. They were made for each other.

"Mole, this is Jonah," she said as we turned onto Eglinton. I said hello. So did she. Jen winked at me for approval. I smiled politely.

We drank beer. Jen kept playing Bob Dylan on the juke box to piss me off. Eric the security guard for the Board of Education building and Pay Equity office sat with us and began to babble. He was a thin, 50-ish man who drank at Jukes during his shifts. He was bombed. He bought us a round.

After a few pitchers of beer and a long conversation about nothing, Jonah began to refer to me as, "My fellow intellectual." I didn't like that. I smiled politely.

Jonah looked at me seriously and said, "What is freedom?"

I was drunk. I didn't care what freedom was. I wanted to fuck Jen. "Freedom," I said after belching. "Is the freedom to destroy yourself."

"Wow," said Jonah. I couldn't believe I'd said such a ridiculous thing. He wasn't listening anyway. Jen was giving him a handjob under the table. She noticed that I noticed and winked at me. I didn't smile politely. I finished my beer.

They decided to leave. I said goodbye, and they left me with Eric. He put Madonna on the juke box, which annoyed me less than Dylan. I really hated Dylan that evening.

"Hey man," said Eric as he waved a full key chain at me, "Keys to the kingdom. Want some school supplies?"

"Indeed," I said. "I wasn't feeling well."

I puked outside of Jukes as we walked to the Pay Equity building. I didn't lose my pace. Eric opened up the building, turned off the alarm and showed be around the joint.

"Take whatever ya want," he prodded me. "Wanna radio? Take the radio."

I unplugged the Sanyo and pocketed some liquid paper and a few pens. He offered me an answering machine, but I refused. I felt ill and wanted to leave.

"Hey man," he said to me as he locked up the building. "D'you live round here? I gotta crash for an hour before drivin' to Brampton."

"Yeah, sure," I said, and we walked past Jukes to the curry house. I let him in, he took off his shoes and fell on my bed. He fell asleep instantly. This is insane, I thought. I've just stolen a radio, I'm drunk and there's a corrupt, alcoholic security guard passed out on my bed. I decided to wake him up and get him out of my room as soon as possible.

I waited ten minutes then shook him awake. "Hey man, you overslept! You gotta go!"

"What? Shit, ya." Eric struggled off my bed, put on his shoes and asked me to walk him to the Board of Education building. I said OK.

When we arrived at the back of the building, Eric said, "D'you like Coke?"

"I don't do drugs," I said.

"No, Coca-Cola," he replied. "Bob'll organize it." I said sure. I was in an agreeable mood. He was out of my room, at least.

Bob was the overnight security guard. His office was dark. Only the video monitors shed any light on his fat frame. He got up to shake hands with Eric, then said hello to me.

"We'd better open the fridge, huh Mole?" he said, spittle at the corners of his lips. He looked like Jabba the Hut.

He gave me a case of Coke Classic. Eric decided to crash in the security office for a while. I thanked them both a left. They seemed pleased that I was leaving. They both had polite smiles on their faces.

A cold wind blew down College Street. My brown leather jacket wasn't keeping out the chills. I felt stupid. I unlocked the door of my room at the back of the curry house, and went to bed fully clothed.

I woke up the next day at noon. My head felt fine and I had a Coke for breakfast.

I still have the Sanyo. I play my Tom Waits tapes on it at work. I moved out of the curry house in March and haven't seen Jen or been back to Jukes since. The beer was always flat anyway.

CREepy CULT

by Toshiya Kuwabara

"To be or not to be," is the choice given by most cults. If you join, it means to be a member of something special, better than the rest. It truthfully is easy to get sucked in by these things if you don't stay on the defensive while trying to keep an open mind. The cult of Scientology understands this. It isn't the usual Hare Krishna thing. The approach they use is something like a benevolent-intimidator. First, the all smiling face asking you to fill out a questionnaire for their free personality test. After filling out their questionnaire they run it through on a computer to get a graph with some commentary. Now comes the intimidator who may vehemently show your failings. Yet the benevolent side hopefully states that "Scientology can improve this."

When I took the test, I have to admit, the guy who was advertising outside on Yonge St. had a voice that could melt butter. Total innocence. Hell, I'd try it just to see what it was like and besides, it was free. Well, walking into the warm building and lead to a table with the questionnaire, I was told that it would take "about twenty minutes" depending upon my reading ability. What I got was a questionnaire with 200 questions squished together and an answer section. Responses were limited to: yes mostly yes, unsure, no mostly no. You could tell that it had been used before because of some unerasered pencil marks. It also asks for your address, name, occupation, etc... Anyway, another person in front of me was also doing the questionnaire. Even this person seemed to be getting aggravated with so many questions. And yet no one left. It was almost like having committed yourself to some kind of initiation without realizing it.

After having filled it out, the results were put through a computer by Mr. Smooth Voice while I read their large picture book about how important the cycle of "create-survive-destroy" is and how all this founded on the way a person perceives things relatively. And so in the picture the white middle class

male who perceives his office job as creating, succeeds. While if he simply slacks off, he's destroying, thus getting the boot. Yet, there is some kind of dialectic involved with the cycle's three elements in relation to one's perception. Maybe if you understood metaphysics you could understand this, but I sure as hell couldn't.

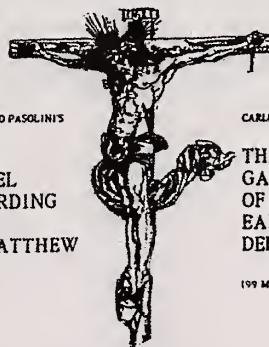
Well, when Mr Smooth Voice was finished, it was time for the benevolent intimidator. First the graph of my personality. The range shows all the personality variables (about ten of them), and on the side divided into three zones: desirable, satisfactory and undesirable (I think). My graph looked terrible with the line plunging down into the undesirable zone. The only hopeful signs were a few satisfactory signs and one desirable one. He explained that this did not reflect what he/scientology thinks but is what came out on the computer (interestingly, later he emphasizes about three times that the graph shows what I responded and that the computer will know if I've lied in my responses). Using the commentary and graph, he then systematically cut me down on each aspect of my personality, even the "desirable" one (desirable for who though?) But even the benevolent side finished each comment with an assuring "scientology can improve this."

As for the intimidator, I apparently have a terrible impact on my friends because of my "criticism" while being very "inhibited" and "depressed". In other words, I'm a skeptical scum of the earth who cannot even insult his own friends, dragging them down. Also, because of my contemplation and attempts to consider all factors involved (long term thinking), I'm refusing myself any immediate success, i.e. "clinging to a life preserver" of "hope" which may not even be in sight, although I do have the "analytical skills". It doesn't even matter if the success is temporary. And by success he meant financially (he even asked if I had a "big inheritance" coming, to account for my "hope"). Also, I'm supposedly wrong in thinking that

Scientology is definitely not a joke. This is a cult, whose disciples believe they have improved themselves because of what Ron can do for anyone. As I left, I saw the faces of two others who had been waiting to get their responses computed and categorized. Waiting for their turn to succumb if not careful. It was as if they were already caught in something which they couldn't see or feel.

"To be or not to be" can be a difficult question if you're not even conscious of what your options are.

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ANOTHER GODDAMN PIECE ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

by Sean "Gimme Five" Fisher

Wait! Before you read on and think "another goddamn article on political correctness; my head is going to explode!", let me add a few points to the discussion that I feel must be reiterated. Between all of this crossfire, the time has arrived where a few things need to be cleared up, and what better forum than U of T's own alter of free speech: the *Innis Herald*.

I believe that the political correctness movement has now entered into extremely dangerous territory, and I believe so for two reasons: The first reason is that, in becoming more and more of an extreme, radical, leftist group, it has fuelled and organized a dangerous right-wing backlash. Second, it has divided and crushed anti-racist and anti-sexist forces that, otherwise, would be able to stamp out these cancerous right-wing movements. In other words, we have been shot in the foot and now we all limp towards our goals as the David Dukes and Preston Mannings sprint towards political power.

The politically correct people claim that there is a right-wing backlash against them, and I agree. However, whether you think of your self as P.C. or not, we should all fear, and *none* of us should ignore, the right-wing backlash which has been rearing its ugly head lately. It's coming from all directions. Across the ocean in East Germany, a black immigrant was burned to death by Nazis. Across the border, David Duke, a former K.K.K. leader, received 36% of the Louisiana vote. Some of his campaign money came from...guess where folks?...Ontario. Hardly surprising in a country where a bigot like Preston Manning can become so popular.

On other Canadian campuses, such as Queens, a death threat was sent to the female editors of a paper. Our own U of T, politically correct as it is, has a fucking Men's Rights organization; an organization whose stupidity is only rivaled by David Duke's National Association for the Advancement of White People. Not to mention that U of T has its own Reform Party movement. Sexual assaults are on the increase, including one in the bathroom downstairs here at Innis. Any male who has read the graffiti in the bathroom stalls will not be surprised to find out that there are Nazis and potential rapists among us; even right here at the flower-children college.

It angers me that this scum - or to be more precise - this perverted retardation of morals even exists. But I preferred it when it was only written on the bathroom walls. I'm

more frightened now that they have political parties and men's rights groups to join.

So how did this negative reaction take place? Well, people, it is the mirror image of the extreme left-wing movements. The P.C.'s have rightfully attempted to alienate these people into a crimer, and I sympathize with their cause. There is, in fact, nothing wrong with politically correct causes. It is the *methods* that we hate. This is what P.C.'s don't understand. They think "How could someone who is left of centre hate our guts?" Well, if you examine the Queens incident, the death threat letter was a reaction to a poem which said things like all white males rape, and then said that dead men don't rape. I have trouble accepting that these ugly and racist ideas are left-wing at all. The person who wrote the poem must have known that they were going to instigate this kind of a reaction. The poem and its reaction letter are two sides of the same coin; or rather, they are two extremes feeding off of each other.

People who say snowman are not necessarily part of a conspiracy to oppress women.

However, more than provoking an organized and threatening right-wing reaction, statements like these (wrongly labelled politically correct) about nothing is correct about racism) alienate people. I don't have to explain why. Lashing out angrily at people for saying snowman instead of snowperson does not unite people. People who say snowman are not necessarily part of a conspiracy to oppress women. Most are people who otherwise would be sympathetic to the causes of political correctness, and have become so threatened by the fear-mongering tactics of the movement that, now, the majority of the people (women, men, black or white) disassociate themselves from it and have become silent.

Let me give you an example of an incident that occurred about two weeks ago at a Victoria College

residence party. A friend of mine (let us call him Joe...can you think of a better generic name?) was standing behind a woman. A friend of Joe's pinched the woman's behind and then hid. The woman turned around and punched Joe in the chest. She then got three men to threaten Joe. Despite appeals of innocence, Joe was soon surrounded by people "who looked like John Lennon" threatening him with violence. The doe began telling Joe that he had committed a serious offence (does this not sound like an Alfred Hitchcock movie?). He was then thrown out of the party, guilty by suspicion. And now this story is even referred to on the front page of the *Strand*.

Joe, sympathetic to the causes of political correctness, disassociates himself from the movement entirely. Wouldn't you if you were falsely accused, and then almost violently lynched? This kind of group thought, witch-hunting, or McCarthyism only alienates people. The movement has become too emotional, too radical, and too negative.

People, and I am speaking about the majority, support politically correct causes. Most people, in our enlightened environment, want equality for the races and the sexes. But the politically correct movement has only alienated most people, and created an extremist reaction. The people in the core of the politically correct movement should ask themselves two things: 1. Are they uniting forces or dividing them? and 2. Are they exposing racism and sexism, or are they helping to fuel and mobilize it.

Everyone else, the majority of the sane people on this campus who are committed to a racist and sexist free campus, should remember that the politically correct movement does not have copyright laws on these issues. We have a polarized community. There are Jack Laytons and then there are June Rowlands, and no one is speaking for the sane people. My plea is for people to stop worrying about whether or not you should say snowman, or snowperson, or snowmyn, or whether it should be capitalized or not, or whatever. It doesn't matter. With David Dukes and Preston Mannings running around it is safer to risk being open and accidentally politically incorrect, rather than giving the stage to the extreme left-wing and the extreme right-wing.

And finally, now that I've got my two cents in, let's have some goddamn peace, love, and sanity on this campus! I can't concentrate between this crossfire!

AKI NO KAZE

by Toshiya Kuwabra

The rapid wind of autumn fell gracefully, caressing the skin of the earth in full breezes. Blowing the golden leaves clinging to their branches, into unlikely showers of colourful rain. The cool dampness of the earth, the sunken dark soil, rose up through the grass to cushion the falls of colour. Inextricably, a moist inviting smell arose from this attached by warm images of the past. Of days when autumn's glow meant a heartful raking of the leaves and all that accompanied it. From earth whence it came, and to earth it shall return. The whole soul of the transitional season stirred Aeschyl's heart.

For Aeschyl knew that this was the season, aside from spring, when the blood thickly burns while it courses through the veins. When passion engulfs the self and mind into torrents of raw emotion. The feeling of primal which surges uninhibitedly, raising the rhythm of one's heartbeat with a full ecstatic charge. Aeschyl felt the awareness of sensation. Conscious of the passion for life flaming beneath the skin, making it oh so sensitive.

Overriding Aeschyl's mind was an unknown irrational force at times, the kind which blinds the intellect, just to concentrate more fully on the erotic. And it was this erotic plenum which Aeschyl saw all around, everywhere. In the fiery pastoral trees and fields, and some of the people who manifested, expressed, more than just a choiceless volition of motions. People whose visages unconsciously poured forth an emotion of their own.

For the moment, life was worth living, for this was a purpose of its own and nothing could falter it. Nothing else mattered but to experience, feel, and be aware.

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INNIS FILM SOCIETY



Larry Jordan's *Sophie's Place*

WINTER/SPRING 1992

tiny filmic noesis

John Ford

thursday, january 16, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, free

How Green Was My Valley, John Ford, 1941, 119 min., b&w, sound, 16mm.

"How Green Was My Valley has suffered the dubious distinction of being remembered as the film that beat out *Citizen Kane* for an Academy Award. The Oscars have seldom served as a reliable index of cinematic quality, and least of all when an eccentric talent like Orson Welles' was concerned. None the less it can be argued that, apart from *Sunrise* in 1927-8, *How Green Was My Valley* was the most meritorious movie ever to win an Academy Award." (Andrew Sarris)

Print courtesy of the Audio-Visual Department of the Metropolitan Toronto Library.

Recent Canadian Avant-Garde Film

thursday, january 23, 1992

cinecycle, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Migraine, Gail Mentlik, 1990, 4 min., 16mm.

Out in the Garden, Vincent Grenier, 1991, 15 min., 16mm.

Destruction of House by Fire, Chris Gehman, 1990, 5 min., super-8mm.

News from West Virginia, Robert Kennedy, 1991, 5 min., super-8mm.

I Wish I was Andy Warhol, Julie Martin, 1991, 5 min., 16mm.

Sheep, Carl Brown, 1991, 7 min., 16mm.

Places to Stay, Edie Steiner, 1991, 20 min., 16mm.

Without, Greg Van Alstyne, 1991, 5 min., 16mm.

Install, Michael Hoolboom, 1990, 8 min., 16mm.

Blue Venice/Red Hotel, John Gagne and S. Reid, 1991, 6 min., 16mm.

Inside Silence, Heather Cook, 1991, 6 min., 16mm.

KMA 459 P, John Kneller, 1992, 7 min., super-8mm.

The Secret of the Lost Tunnel, John Porter, 1982-92, 8 min., super-8mm.

Selected by Amy Bodman and Brian Nash

venues

innis town hall: 2 Sussex Avenue (enter from St. George St., one block south of Bloor)

cinecycle: 317 Spadina Avenue (enter from alley east of Spadina, south of Baldwin)

art gallery of ontario jackman hall: 317 Dundas Street West (enter from McCaul Street doors)

hart house music room: 7 Hart House Circle (one block south of Museum station, off Queen's Park Circle)

ryerson polytechnical institute, photo arts building, room 307: 122 Bond St. (northeast of Yonge and Dundas)

Larry Jordan

San Francisco-based artist Larry Jordan began his filmmaking career in the 1950s, working in the *trance film* genre, wherein the filmmaker appears as a first-person protagonist undergoing a poetic transformation of consciousness in the film. Jordan soon abandoned this mode and developed a broad range of hitherto largely unexplored forms of filmmaking: hand-painted films, animation collage, portraits, pixillation, etc. Like the work of two of his acknowledged influences, Max Ernst and Joseph Cornell, Jordan's films are lyrical constructions of self-enclosed imaginary worlds. Jordan will be present to introduce and discuss three programmes of films in Toronto.

wednesday, february 5, 1992

hart house music room, 5:00 pm, free

The Visual Compendium, 1990, 17 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

"Your Compendium is a perfect counter-part, it seems to me, to the placement of Sophia's length and breadth, inasmuch as this new work presents dreams of the chores and diversion of the world—lacerated by 2 meditations on War: the 1st an almost endless rain of missiles on an ancient chariot, the 2nd your wondrous clown dancing on battleship cannons—Bravo! Nothing could be clearer on the subject (especially welcome at this time); and in between (as suggested slightly before and slightly after) a feelsome balance spectrum of dreamed dailiness finally exposed as—if one can but see it as you have—the greatest show on Earth." (Stan Brakhage)

Co-presented with the Hart House Film Board.

thursday, february 6, 1992

art gallery of ontario, jackman hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Sophie's Place, 1983-7, 90 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

"Jordan uses cinematography to give his live-action films a shadowy mysteriousness. That same quality is even better realized in his animated films, for which he is probably best known. A long string of these extraordinary animated films has now culminated in the new, feature-length, *Sophie's Place*.

"*Sophie's Place*, in the filmmaker's words, 'evolved from and revolves around the mosque (both interior and exterior) of Saint Sophia in Constantinople.' Static engravings of Saint Sophie, of castles, of trees and flowers, serve as settings for a spectacular variety of foreground objects that dance across the frame. Objects and figures change shape, transforming themselves via rapid montage. A huge eye and eyebrow rotate on a large bald head. Photographs of human and animal figures cavort about with a jagged rhythm." (Fred Camper)

Co-presented with the Art Gallery of Ontario.

friday, february 7, 1992

ryerson photo arts building, room 307, 2:30 pm, free

Duo Concertantes, 1961-4, 9 min, b&w, sound, 16mm.

"Animation. The theme is Weightlessness. Objects and characters are cut loose from habitual meanings, also from tensions and gravitational limitations. A lyric Eric Satie track accompanies the film. Such a portrait seems necessary from time to time to remind us that equilibrium and harmony are not possible, and that we will not dissolve into a jelly if we allow ourselves to relax into them: A horseman rides through the landscape, through the town, but never arrives anywhere in particular. An acrobat swings on a rope above a canal in Venice, and is content just to swing there. Nothing threatens to disturb them. This film is a total contrast to the Kafka-like oddities of Eastern European animation" (Canyon Cinema)

Visions of a City, 1957-79, 9 min., B&W sepia tint, sound, 16mm.

Our Lady of the Sphere, 1969, 10 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

Masquerade, 1981, 5 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

The Visual Compendium, 1990, 17 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

Co-presented with the Photographic Arts Department, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.

Carolee Schneemann

New York based Carolee Schneemann has worked in film, video, performance, painting, installation, and writing, for over three decades. Since 1963, when she performed *Eye Body*, using her own nude body as part of the "happening," Schneemann's work has been concerned with eroticism and issues of the body in general, often taking her cues from Wilhelm Reich's radical psychoanalytic theories concerning sexual liberation. Schneemann will be present for two screenings and one lecture/slideshow performance in Toronto.

tuesday, february 11, 1992

ryerson photo arts building, room 307, 6:00 pm, free

Program TBA.

Co-presented with the Photographic Arts Department, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.

thursday, february 13, 1992

art gallery of ontario, jackman hall, 7:00 pm, \$5.00

Fuses, 1965, 23 min., colour, silent, 16mm.

Schneemann's *Fuses*, while being one of the most erotic films ever made, subverts the model of sexuality based on an active and aggressive male objectifying a passive and weak female. Liberally manipulating the film medium through the use of collaged imagery, hand-painting, cutting, dying the film stock and superimposition, Schneemann felt "free to explore the physical-visual context of sexuality as well as the nature of the film as material substance." *Fuses*, for Schneemann, is "an homage to a relationship of ten years, filmed by Schneemann while participant in the action."

Viet Flakes, 1966, 11 min., b&w, sound (by Jim Tenney), 16mm and videotape.

"...composed from an obsessive collection of Vietnam atrocity images I collected from foreign magazines and newspapers over a five year period. The camera 'travels' within the photographs producing rough animation-images in and out of focus, broken rhythms, perceptual contradictions combine with a disconcerting sound collage which intercuts Vietnamese religious chants and secular songs, fragments of Bach and the 'Top of the Charts'." (Carolee Schneemann)

Plumb Line, 1968-72, 15.25 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

"Breaking down, splitting apart, burning up: a relationship and the film itself. Edited from scrap diary footage shot in 8mm, hand printed as 16mm. *Plumb Line* is a moving and powerful subjective chronicle of the breaking up of a love relationship. The film is a devastating exorcism, as the viewer sees and hears the film approximate the interior memory of the experience." (Carolee Schneemann)

Carl Ruggles' Christmas Breakfast, 1966, 10 min., colour, silent, videotape.

Vesper's Holy Stampede—Portrait of C.S., Victoria Vesna, 1990, 10 min., colour, sound, videotape.

"...a collaboration in which I merge issues of domestic eroticism with a cat, clitoridectomy, and a witchcraft's genital evidence." (Carolee Schneemann)

Co-presented with the Art Gallery of Ontario and New Music Concerts.

friday, february 14, 1992

art gallery of ontario, jackman hall, 7:00 pm, \$5.00

The Delirious Arousal of Destruction; or: Is there a Feminist Erotic Iconography, A Text/Slide Event

"In her slide/text performance, Schneemann will trace the history of her visual work as a painter working with extended materials—from canvas into space. Schneemann investigates how the energy of her constructed works relate to that of her performed works created in parallel over the past three decades.

"Interwoven into her ongoing inquiry, Schneemann relates the symbols and artifacts of ancient Goddess cultures as confirming the energy behind the eroticism and imaging of her work. Her discussion of the contemporaneous destruction of the Aphrodite sites and shrines by the military actions in Sumer and Mesopotamia is coupled with an urgent

need in Western culture to physicalize and identify with the sacred erotic. A wide range of images on slides, ranging from Paleolithic shards, Sumerian birth figurines, and Victorian Madonnas, to contemporary Body Art illustrates the lecture." (Crosby McCloy)

Première: Bruce Elder's *Azure Serene*

thursday, february 20, 1992

art gallery of ontario, jackman hall, 7:00 pm, \$5.00

Azure Serene: Mountains, Rivers, Sea and Sky, 1992, 95 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

For Saint Bernard (having now been through Abelard.) Odysseus' unstable sea alters ceaselessly, its flowing eternal as that of light itself. Love arises out of the darkness of memory (*Dal primo giorno ch' l' vidi il suo viso in questa vita, infino a questa vista, non m'è il seguire al mio cantar preciso.*) These mountains, hills, and valleys are as much of the order of mind as Mind itself, for their seed is number. The light this sky pours down is celestial; its goodness nourishes as 'overstanding up the earth it fills the nine fields to heaven.' Though perception is lightning, understanding is slow; but beauty is in slowness. This now is not just for now but forever.

And there was heard a chorus of voices, like chimes in which each bell contains the memory of something earlier and seemingly, but not really, long ago forgotten (for art retains the past.) A tissue woven in light, in brightly coloured bands, wrapped around me tightly. The mind came to rest in luminous All-in-All (omnia, quae sunt, lumina sunt) as the repeat of history both conforms to and forms timelessness. Light became memory that rescued all that is loved, enfolding it in stillness. "What thou lov'st well remains, the rest is dross."

Inspired by much recent reading in Rilke, Zukofsky and, as much as before, in Pound; in Pound, especially by that cubist-style collage of allusions to the gods of which his tradition, Cicero and Ibycus and Poliziano, spoke:

I sat on the Dogana's steps
For the gondolas cost too much, that year,
And there were not 'those girls,' there was one face...
And the lit cross-beams that year in the Morosini...
Gods float in the azure air.
Bright gods and Tuscan, back before dew was shed.
Light: and the first light before ever dew was fallen.
Panisks, and from the oaks, dryas,
And from the apple, maelid,
Through all the wood, and the leaves are full of voices,
A-whisper, and the clouds bowe over the lake.
And there are gods upon them,
And in the water, the almond-white swimmers,
The silvery water glazes the upturned nipple.

(E.P.)

and, most importantly of all, that canto of the Eleusian mysteries, canto CVI:

Anthene Pronoia,
in hypostasis
Helios, Perse: Circe
Zeus: Artemis out of Leto
Under wildwood
Help me to neede.
...
And in thy mind beauty, O Artemis
Over asphodel, over broom-plant,
faun's ear a-level that blossom.
Yao and Shun ruled by jade.
Whuder ich maei lidhan
helpe me to neede.
the flowers are blessed against thunder bolt
helpe me to neede.
That great acorn of light bulging outward.
Aquileia, caffaris, caltha palistis,
ulex, that is gorse, herys arachnites;
Scrub oak climbs against cloud-wall—
three years peace, they had to get rid of him,
—violet, sea green, and no name.
Circe's were not, having fire behind them.
Buck stands under ash grove,
jasmine twines over capitolis
Selena Arsinoi
So late did queens rise into heaven.

by all of Rilke's *Duino Elegies*, but the 'Nineth Elegy' more than the others, perhaps:

Why, if this interval of being can be spent serenely
in the form of a laurel, slightly darker than all
other green, with tiny waves on the edges
of every leaf (like the smile of a breeze)—: why then
have to be human—and, escaping from fate,
keep longing for fate?...

...because truly being here is so much; because

everything here
apparently needs us, this fleeting world, which in some

strange way
keeps calling to us. Us, the most fleeting of all.
Once for each thing. Just once; no more. And we too,
just once. And never again. But to have been
this once, completely, even if only once:
to have been at one with the earth, seems beyond undoing.

...
Earth, isn't this what you want: to arise within us,
Invisible? Isn't it your dream...
...

Look, I am living. On what? Neither childhood nor future
grows any smaller. . . . Superabundant being
wells up in my heart.

And (a major inspiration of my new aesthetic ideas):

The lines of this new song are nothing But a tune making
the nothing full Stonelike become more
hard than silent The tune's image holding
in the line.

(Zukofsky)

And, as for so many years now, in Dante (*O luce
eterna che sola in te suli, sola t'intendi, e da te
intellesta e intendente te ami e arridi!*)

And the irony? Constantly (truly, constantly, for
these are the '90s) remembering the comments
Pound made to an interviewer in 1962, "It is
difficult to write a paradise when all the superficial
indications are that you ought to write an apoca-
lypse. It is obviously much easier to find inhabitants
for an inferno or even a purgatorio." And the
solution? Pound, from the same interview, again. "I
am trying to collect the record of the top flights of
the mind."

Elder will be present to introduce the film. Co-
presented with the Art Gallery of Ontario

Bruce Elder's *Azure Serene*

More Neglected than Usual

thursday, february 27, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Surprise Germaine Dulac film.

TBA.

Christmas on Earth, Barbara Rubin, 1963, 29.25 min., b&w, silent (sound on radio or tape), 16mm, twin-screen, of sorts.

"Barbara Rubin, from the Order of Fools, bursting and burning with hallucinations, shooting her first movie, with the excitement of a holy nun, feverishly engaged to rip out fragments of veiled revelations from her subconscious and the world, the sensory experiences and visions of the sad loveless century, pouring her heart out." (Jonas Mekas)

"The only truly erotic film besides *Fuses*. Not to be missed." (Kate MacKay)

Yes, Naomi Levine, 1963, 22.75 min, b&w/colour, sound, 16mm.

Jeremelu, Naomi Levine, 1964, 2 min., b&w, sound, 16mm.

"Naomi Levine has many faces. There were times when Naomi was a troublemaker. She was protesting, Peace strike...closing of the Living Theatre...disarmament...movie censorship—she was there, ready for any cause.

"At the same time Naomi was painting flowers. Huge, colorful, sad, almost tragic flowers. She still paints them. She paints flowers everywhere she goes.

"Then there is Naomi the underground movie star, the 'black lioness,' the 'Egyptian broad'; the voluptuous star of Andy Warhol's *Tarzan and Jane*, in which she took her 'famous' soap bubble bath and outdid Hedy Lamarr in her swimming scene, in a Hollywood pool. She descended down the spider webs in Jack Smith's *Normal Love*, in which she had six legs and looked ominously black; she was served a plate together



Naomi Levine's *Yes*

with ripe autumn fruits, grapes, and bananas in Andy's *Dracula* movie; she appeared (incognito) in Barbara Rubin's *Christmas on Earth*; and she has been kissed and kissing endlessly at sixteen frames per second in Andy Warhol's notorious *Kiss* movies...

"Now Naomi has become a film-maker herself. Her two movies—*Jaremelu* and *Yes*—were shown on last Monday's program at the Film-Makers' Cinematheque. Since *Yes* is one of cinema's most beautiful pastorals and a manifesto of a desperately romantic soul, I thought the occasion was well worth an interview. So we had the following conversation:

"JM: Who are you?

"NL: Now I am a marshmallow.

"JM: Oh.

"NL: Yes.

"JM: Why did you make *Yes*?

"NL: Because I wanted to make something beautiful.

"JM: Why 'something' beautiful. Why not something perceptive—or of social consequence—or sexy?

"NL: Beauty is all of these things. You see, I sent to Puerto Rico and made a demonstration at Rami Air Force Base—and fifteen people lost their jobs and were beaten up and their homes wrecked. SO I realized that this was not the way. The way would be to make something, to give something to my world more beautiful and of life than these armaments which are merely ugly and full of pain." (Jonas Mekas and Naomi Levine)

Framing Factory, Cindy Gavel, 1986, 8 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

A circular, sinusoidal path, a traffic report and weather report are looped, repeated, and re-printed, yielding an ominous, obsessive rendering of a space and time.

Bill's Hat, Joyce Wieland, 1967, 7.5 min., colour, sound (live), 16mm.

This is the opening sequence of a multimedia event that was staged by Wieland in 1967.

Stan Brakhage

thursday, march 5, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Delicacies of Molten Horror Synapse, 1991, 10 min., colour, silent, 16mm.

Perhaps the culmination of Brakhage's work in the hand-painted mode. *Delicacies* is a meditation on television and consciousness.

Vision of the Fire Tree, 1990, 6 min., colour, silent, 16mm.

All can become a tree in the fire of the mind's eye.

Nightmusic, 1986, 30 sec., colour, silent, 16mm.

"This little film (originally painted in IMAX) attempts to capture the essence of sadness, as the eyes have it when closed in meditation on sorrow." (Stan Brakhage)

"A work of hand-painted 'moving visual thinking': colours and forms coursing, flowing, bursting, as if a fire in water—of the earth, of the body, of the mind." (Marilyn Brakhage)

Rage Net, 1988, 30 sec., colour, silent, 16mm.

"Much of what has been said about the above film could be repeated here, except that *Rage Net* arises from meditation upon, rather than being trapped psychologically by, rage." (Stan Brakhage)

Glaze of Cathexis, 1990, 3 min., colour, silent, 16mm.

"This hand painted work is easily the most minutely detailed ever given to me to do, for it traces (as best as I'm able) the hypnotic after effects of psychological cathexis as designated by Freud in his first (and unfinished) book on the subject—*Toward a Scientific Psychology*" (Stan Brakhage)

Burial Path, 1978, 11 min., colour, silent, 18 f.p.s., 16mm.

"This film begins with an image of a dead bird. The mind moves to forget, as well as to remember: this film, in the tradition of Thot-Fal'N, graphs the process of forgetfulness against all oddities of the remembered bird-shape." (Stan Brakhage)

The Domain of the Moment, 1977, 15 min., colour, silent, 16mm.

"Here are four films in contemplation upon those events which are so centred upon one moment that chronology seems almost obliterated or at least unimportant in resemblance. Most animals seem, to me, to inhabit this eventuality as a norm. I was permitted to share such experience, camera in hand, with several creatures these four non-times; but it was the memory of those experiences which made it possible to edit a formal equivalent for the continuity art of film." (Stan Brakhage)

@, 1979, 7 min, colour, silent, 18 f.p.s., 16mm.

"The first film of mine which is so very much there where it's at THAT it deserves a visual symbol as title and no further explanation from me at/et all." (Stan Brakhage)

Flesh of Morning, 1956/1986, 21 min., colour, sound (revised from original), 16mm.

"I was never content with the original soundtrack of this early work, and over the last decade I've been increasingly involved in the 'sound of film' again and tempted to re-make that track. Finally, this year of collaborating on *Faustfilm: An Opera*, I reversed and re-edited the original track, and am content this accomplishes a definitive mix of sound and psychodramatic light." (Stan Brakhage)

Stephen Sachs in Person

thursday, march 19, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Stephen Sachs is a Dusseldorf-based filmmaker, working intensively with optical printing.

More specific programme information will be available in March. Co-presented with the Goethe-Institut Toronto.

Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures*

friday, march 20, 1992

art gallery of ontario, jackman hall, 7:00 pm & 9:00 pm, \$10/\$7.00 for Innis Film Society and Pleasure Dome members

Scotch Tape, Jack Smith, 1962, 3 min., sound, colour, 16mm.

The Great Pasty Triumph (a segment of Normal Love), Jack Smith, 1964, 14 min., sound, colour, 16mm.

Flaming Creatures, 1962/3, 45 min., sound, b&w, 16mm.

The Film Society presents the first-ever Canadian screening of the late underground filmmaker Jack Smith's camp classic *Flaming Creatures* on March 20. Other rare material by Smith, including *Scotch Tape* and "The Great Pasty Triumph," an episode of his unfinished *Normal Love*, will also be shown.

Smith's reputation as a major figure in the American avant-garde owes as much to extra-cinematic factors as it does to his own directorial œuvre, consisting as it does of only two extant completed films which Smith did not dismantle or destroy. Smith's infamous personal antics, his status as a rebel among rebels, his performances in other people's films, and the notoriety of his most well-known but rarely—screened work *Flaming Creatures* have been more written-about and discussed than his filmmaking itself.

Born in Columbus, Ohio in 1932, Smith arrived in New York in 1950 and studied dance with Ruth St. Denis and direction with Lee Strasberg. Smith made a number of films in the late 1950s, but the earliest one still in existence is *Scotch Tape* (1961-2), a 3 minute film made during the shooting of Ken Jacobs's *Star Spangled To Death*. Smith borrowed Jacobs's camera and recorded an ecstatic dance by the cast in what appears to be a junk yard. Smith's reputation as a filmmaker, however, is almost solely attributable to his subsequent film, *Flaming Creatures* (1962-3). Shot for \$100 on old army surplus film stock, the film is composed of numerous sequences centring around an imaginary transvestite orgy, filmed with actors from the Theatre of the Ridiculous on the rooftop of a Manhattan theatre over seven consecutive summer weekends, with a soundtrack consisting of Latin American pop songs, scratchy rock 'n' roll ("Be-Bop-A-Lu-La"), Chinese music, bullfight sounds, and German tangos. *Flaming Creatures* was hailed as a masterpiece by many critics. Susan Sontag, who practically invented public awareness of the camp aesthetic in her discussion of the film, called it a "triumphant example of an aesthetic vision of the world—and such a vision is, at its core, epicene." Jonas Mekas called Smith "one of the last and uncompromising great artists our generation had produced." Ken Kelman compared Smith to Dante and Milton: "Flaming Creatures might be subtitled *Pandemonium Regained*, a paean not for the Paradise Lost, but for the Hell Satan gained." The film did not, however, find such an appreciative audience with various police forces, censorship bodies, and even the U.S. Congress, who were shown *Flaming Creatures* as an example of threatening deviant culture, even though the film's sexual

content might have stood by today's standards. Disgusted by the treatment of his films by both defenders and detractors, Smith himself withdrew them from distribution in the early 1970s, only making sporadic appearances with them, sometimes in conjunction with performance events he would stage in New York.

Smith's work will be introduced by Jim Hoberman, a fan and sometimes friend of Smith's, Village Voice film critic, and Instructor of Cinema Studies at New York University. In the wake of Smith's AIDS-related death in 1989, Hoberman has, with Smith's family's blessing, been coordinating the distribution of Smith's films, most importantly *Flaming Creatures* which has, for too long, remained more read-about than experienced.

Co-presented with the Art Gallery of Ontario, Pleasure Dome, Anthology Film Archives and the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre. Tickets (\$10) may be purchased one hour before screen time outside the Jackman Hall (McCaull St. entrance); at the AGO's Info Desk (Tues to Sun 11am-5:30pm, Wed to 9pm) or by telecharge with major credit cards: 977-0414 ext 268. All proceeds go towards obtaining a print of *Flaming Creatures* for distribution at the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre.

Uncle Moses

saturday, march 21, 1992

art gallery of ontario, jackman hall, 7:00 pm, \$5.00

Uncle Moses, Sidney Goldin and Aubrey Scotto, 1932, 87 min., sound, b&w, Yiddish with English subtitles, 35mm.

While in Toronto, AGO, Hoberman, author of *Bridge of Light: Yiddish Film Between Two Worlds* will discuss Yiddish cinema. The context for this will be a rare screening of *Uncle Moses*, an early sound film which explores the Americanization of Jewish immigrants in New York. The film was adapted from a novel by Sholem Asch and stars Maurice Schwartz, who was known as the "Olivier of the Yiddish stage."

Co-presented with the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Centre for Jewish Studies, York University. Film courtesy of the Rutenberg and Everett Yiddish Film Library, National Center for Jewish Film.



Jack Smith in *Flaming Creatures*

Arnold Schoenberg

thursday, april 2, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Introduction to Arnold Schoenberg's "Accompaniment to a Cinematographic Scene," Jean-Marie Straub, 1973, 15 min., colour, sound (German with English subtitles), 35mm.

Examination of an artist's political commitment: Schoenberg's letters justifying his decision to leave Nazi Germany.

Moses and Aaron, Jean-Marie Straub and Danielle Huillet, 1969, 88 min., colour, sound, 35mm.

"The opening sequence of Jean-Marie Straub and Danielle Huillet's *Moses und Aaron* is one of the most rigorous and systematic avoidances of shot-countershot in the history of cinema. It introduces an extraordinarily ambitious film which, as a whole, strives to remain faithful to Schoenberg's unfinished opera of 1928-31. As such it is the most successful film yet made that adapts a major modernist source text to cinema. The entire text, as written by the composer, occurs on the screen, including the unscored third act. Straub and Huillet make this awkward, self-imposed ordeal all the more difficult for themselves by rigidly adhering to their doctrine of never dubbing sound..."

"In a revealing interview in *Cahiers du Cinéma*, Straub claimed that the 'theological' aspect of the opera, not its music, attracted him. He also stresses the identity of the chorus of Israelites with the voice of God, literalizing the Roman adage 'vox populi vox dei' with a vengeance. Pressing an improbable interpretation of Schoenberg's text, he and Huillet see the opera as an anti-Zionist polemic in which the Promised Land must remain an unfertilized utopia for a nomadic tribe." (P. Adams Sitney)

Co-presented with New Music Concerts.

films.

Amy Greenfield's *Antigone/Rites for the Dead*

friday, april 4, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

Antigone/Rites for the Dead, 1989, 85 min., colour, sound.

Music by Glenn Branca, Diamanda Galas, Elliott Sharp, Paul Lemos, David Van Tieghem. Camera: Hilary Harris and Judy Irola.

The first feature by Amy Greenfield brings to the screen the legend of the daughter of Oedipus in an emotionally intense, visually extraordinary film. The film-maker transforms the drama of the heroine who defied the State to bury her brother, into ceaseless movement and music, a slowly crescendoing outcry against the world's injustice climaxing in an end-of-the-world requiem. Hilary Harris's cinematography adds magnificently to the passion and intensity of the film.

Co-presented with New Music Concerts.

Films for Music for Film: Lawrence Brose

friday, april 3, 1992

innis town hall, 7:00 pm, \$3.00

"My film work is significantly informed by the American Experimental Film tradition. Often personal in nature, these films are influenced by events and individuals. They are cinepoems which build on the vertical layering of experiences rather than the more linear structure familiar to the narrative form. Images appear and reoccur in variation-building, mutating and abstracting. With each film I embark upon an experience of discovery, more interested in what I might find than in proving what I know. My hope is always to see what lies beneath the surface of an experience or event, through the making of each film, and finding a vocabulary to give it voice. They are invested in the exploitation of film as material, attempts to expand my visual palette, while employing an economy of ideas and nuances.

"Films for Music For Film represents a reconsideration of the interactive dynamics of sound and image in film. Usually, sound elements are incorporated after a film's completion. In this instance, however, the score and spoken text function as the actual film script, directing both the film's form and content. The engagement is twofold: I initially derive images through my own responses to both the music and accompanying text, subsequently relying on the score for the film's structure employing montage, superimposition, abstraction, etc. These films are in no way merely descriptive visions of the score and text, but rather synergistic fusions of sound, words and images. The films in this series received their première presentation with live musical accompaniment and narration." (LB)

Everbest, Virgil, 1990, 8 min., b&w/colour, sound, 16mm.

Music: Piano Sonata No. 2 (1930), Virgil Thomson.

Chamnan, 1990, 14 min., b&w, sound, 16mm.

Original score (for piano, percussion & tape) by Douglas Cohen. Original tape sounds by Lawrence Brose.

Long Eyes of Earth, 1990, 10 min., b&w/colour, sound, 16mm.

Music by Yvar Mikhashoff, "Looking Through the Air," from the trilogy "Elemental Figures." Poem: "Shaman" by Paul Schmidt.

War Songs, 1990, 12 min., b&w/colour, sound, 16mm.

Music by Mark Bennett (performed by the Buffalo New Music Ensemble). Poems: Paul Schmidt.

Ryoanji, 1990, 20 min., colour, sound, 16mm.

Music by John Cage (performed by the Buffalo New Music Ensemble).

Study #15, 1990, 1 min., b&w, sound.

Music by Conlon Nancarrow.

Co presented with New Music Concerts. Brose will be present to discuss his

venues

innis town hall: 2 Sussex Avenue (enter from St. George St., one block south of Bloor)

cinecycle: 317 Spadina Avenue (enter from alley east of Spadina, south of Baldwin)

ago jackman hall, art gallery of ontario: 317 Dundas Street West (enter from McCaul Street doors)

hart house music room: 7 Hart House Circle (one block south of Museum station, off Queen's Park Circle)

ryerson polytechnical institute, photo arts building, room 307: 122 Bond St. (northeast of Yonge and Dundas)

For more information please call (416) 408-3332. Faxes may be sent to (416) 977-8547.

A subscription for the remainder of the 1991-92 season (January-June) may be purchased for \$18.00.

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The mailing address for the Film Society is 2 Sussex Ave., Toronto ON M5S 1J5.

Spleen Four

The Obscene Body/ Politic by Carolee Schneemann

1) Bullets of projection are aimed into our bodies: trajectories of phallogocentric apprehension produce our "wounds." A smoking gun grasped in that frozen hand. There's a cock/dick tracing this Saturday Night Special directed at our "privates." Word play/gun play focus sexual frame-up, the dissolve, deception—the veritable slight of hand—by which patriarchal culture constructs its myths, imposes superstitions on "the facts of life." Projection deforms perception of the female body. As bizarrely consecrated in Western creation myths as Athena emerging from Zeus' head; as usurpatrice of Mother Right as the birth of Dionysus from his father's thigh; as biologically contorted as Lord Jesus born from the body of a virgin mother. Political and personal violence against women are twined behind/within this stunting defeminization of history. For many of us the layers of implicit and explicit censorship constructing our social history combine with contemporary contradictions to force our radicalization.

Even though we live in the best of times—as our reading, writing, research and creative pre-eminence attest—one out of four of us will be subjected to rape; but we will not have been torn from our childhood sleep for a brutal clitoral excision, (still extant in Islamic cultures within Africa, some parts of Egypt and the Sudan, and most recently introduced to France by workers from these other places). We will not have endured the probable fifteen pregnancies of our fertile years (forbidden contraception or abortion); so we are less likely to have died giving birth; we will not be burned as witches, sold into slavery, and the most transgressive among us may even evade being locked up in an asylum.

The burgeoning recent work of women within the arts is fuelled by three thousand years of fracture—the masculist enforcement of self-righteous institutionalizations that dogged our heels. Militarism, androcentric law and science, religious authoritarianism, economic controls—the twisted splits, dualism, constraints which held patriarchal politics in place: mind/body, culture/nature, structure/nurture, male/female, yin/yang, etc., etc. ... Feminist analysis has asked what does this prestidigitation obscure of our own experience? displace and mask to the benefit of a phallogocentric fabulation?

Clearly our lost and splintered history, the ways we now integrate our creativity and sexuality have demanded feminist explication. Women artists explore erotic imagery because our bodies exemplify a historic battleground; we are dismantling conventional sexual ideology and its punishing suppressions, and because our experience of our bodies has not corresponded to cultural depiction.

2) I was drawing before I could speak. As a child I believed I could spend my life making images, though I had no concept of what "an artist" might be. My God-mother brought me a tiny set of oil paints. I remember the color of each tube, the small tin pots for turpentine and linseed oil, alchemical means to create a world. I was eleven. Oil paint was forbidden—it could leave permanent marks. I could ruin something. The first paintings were done crouched in snow by a frozen pond; dragging stiffening daubs of blue, green, gold, across gray cardboard rectangles. As a very young artist I was bewildered by my isolation. What was an "artist"? Might the one named Cezanne have been a woman? (Anne was a girl's name, but I was afraid to ask.) It would take years of research (beyond any information provided by school and university) to discover precedents in the arts ... that there had indeed been painters, sculptors; though they had often died in childbirth, had their painting re-attributed to fathers, lovers, brothers. This subtle and pervasive "censorship," this excision paralleled my later rage and confusion at being denied a feminine pronoun ("The artist he" ... "Everyone will hand up his hat" ... "Creative man and his images"). And to discover that my culture denied female an honorable genital. My sexuality was idealized, fetishized, but any organic experience of my own body was referred to as defiling, stinking, contaminating ... (Bible study and graffiti under the train trestle shared a common depreciation.) History, sexuality and naming were subsumed, contorted. I would have to be "a spy in the house of art" (to paraphrase Anaïs Nin), as well as "a spy in the house of love."

3) Suppression and exclusion touched my early painting in various confusing ways, starting with the acceptance and then expulsion of a nude self-portrait, from the student exhibit at Bard College (where I had a full scholarship). Another controversy followed with a large, horizontal oil on canvas portrait of my companion (boyfriend, James Tenney) asleep on his side; I considered it an important step in abstracting the figure and ground into equal color field saturations; faculty and students enveloped the work in a cacophony of jokes and insults concerning the painted inclusion of the penis (as an attribute of an actual male person they knew). These contrary perceptions situated a conflict of principle, which was soon mimicked by a gallery's invitation—and then refusal—to exhibit a nude photographic sequence made in 1963. *Eye Body* introduced images of a shamanic ritual, of the sacred erotic at a time when the

female nude dwelled in "girlie" magazines, pornographic detective fictions, photographic reports on "primitive natives," classical western painting, abstract expressionist dis-members, or the iconic frontal-spread paper dolls of pop art. Could there be any other erotic iconography?

In 1962, just out of college I had begun a loft environment built of large panels interlocked by rhythmic color units, broken mirrors and glass, lights, motorized umbrellas. I worked with my whole body—the scale of the panels incorporating my own physical scale. Then I wanted my actual body to be combined with the work as an integral material—a further dimension to this construction, a ritualized set of physical transformations (not anticipating the trance-like state the process would induce). Later I wrote:

Covered in paint, grease, chalk, ropes, plastic, I establish my body as visual territory. Not only am I an image-maker, but I explore the image values of flesh as material I choose to work with. The body may remain erotic, sexual, desired, desiring but it is as well votive: marked, written over in a text of stroke and gesture discovered by my creative female will ... (1965)²

Among the thirty-six "transformative actions," an often reproduced image is the frontal nude where two garden snakes crawl on my torso. An affinity to Cretan Goddess would only later become apparent as my research into early gynocentric cultures deepened. The image is disturbing and attractive because of its association with an archaic eroticism, but its contemporary confrontation of taboos remains to be addressed.

One of the startling aspects of this image is that my naked body includes a visible clitoris. Western/masculist art history has been obsessed with the female nude, but a contemporary artist as a genetically sexed nude set off a tireless round of inquisition: what was the meaning of these "obscene" images? and why were they in the "art world" (rather than a "porno world"). Images from *Eye Body* became classic referents as feminist art historians explored the sacred erotic, the shamanic body, and archetypal linkage to ancient goddess figurines (which I had not seen in '63).³ But the initial reactions of curators and critics I respected was that these images were narcissistic and lewd. I was told, "If you want to run around naked don't bother the art world; if you want to paint, go and paint."

A measure of Western psychosis was clarified when I realized there were only two roles offered for me to fulfil: either as a "pornographer" or as an emissary from Aphrodite. Both elude political, social affect functioning as dumping grounds that cloud constructed differences of the erotic and obscene.

4) In 1964 censorship danced around my Kinetic Theater work *Meat Joy*, which I thought of as "an erotic rite to enliven my guilty culture." Conceived first for Paris, the "Festival of Free Expression" organized by Jean-Jacques Lebel, it was performed at the Centre Culturel Americain; then in London, and at the Judson Church in New York (where I had choreographed for the Judson Dance Theater and developed my own "Kinetic Theater" works). I had intended the performers to be nude; the moral decency rules in France at that time were that naked males and females would be subject to arrest if they moved: they could remain in frozen statue positions without risking arrest. ... In New York moving or frozen nudes in public were forbidden. I devised scant feather and fur coverings for our active group of nine performers. In both Paris and New York audiences, informants from the local police stations or from "moral decency" groups were present. A truncated performance version in London ended abruptly with police entering one door as we performers exited covered in blankets to be hidden on the floor of cars speeding away from Vox Hall. During the Paris performance a man came out of the audience, pushed me against a wall and tried to strangle me. (I was saved by three older women who had never seen any "performance" and were convinced this assault was not part of it).

Eye Body ('63), *Meat Joy* ('64), and my film *Fuses* ('65) form a trio of shameless eroticism emerging within a culture that has lost and denied its sensory connections to dream and myth and the female powers. The very fact that these works remain active in the cultural imagination has to do exactly with the latent content that the culture was eager to suppress. How could a twenty-four year old artist insist, "This is the truth"? Some other artists had a sense of affiliation with the power of the images—they recognized "something." In 1963-64 there was no "feminist analysis" to redress masculist tradition; there was no overt Jungian connection to a communal unconscious; there was no semiotic or anthropological scan of archetypes that could link our visual images to what I called then "primary cultures" (detesting the expression "primitive").

It's important to also remember there were no funding sources for Performance Art in the 1960s (the term, the concept, did not exist)—there were wild, crazy *Happenings*, *Fluxus*, and *Events*—all produced in their early years with available trash, found objects, and willing collaborators. If we had then been applying to government agencies, would forms of self-censorship have constricted our use of degraded materials? impinged upon our considered disregard for the comfort of the audience? We came up out the shadow world identified with the suppressed "irrational" of our culture. Our work seized dynamic implications of Abstract Expressionism to extend the active visual surface into actual physical space and time, and to dematerialize the frame, the object, the aesthetic commodity.

5) There is something female about performance art itself: The way the body carries form and meaning into empheral space and actual time. The admittance of unconscious forbidden material, dependent on self-exposure, self-display. A sense of associative margins in which artists are a raw material—as nature is, moving freely in realms of the uncontrollable and suppressed. Performance developed generative forms without proscribed mastery—expected (phallic) shaping, interiority as our nexus—the source of discovery and the immediacy of our physicality—lines up somewhere in the psyche with "femaleness." Performance art embraced a wide range of taboo and social issues in a very brief time because it was an open territory. The Art World/Industry (galleries, collectors, magazines, critics, art departments) had been wary of Performance Art. We sprang out of the canvas and left them holding the brush—which was weighted

with the expressionistic painters rending of private self into the public event. I arrived in New York City just in time to see my older painting heroes drunk, fighting, fucking, jumping through windows (in my loft), crashing up their cars—the infantile heroics which diverted castration fantasies into symbolic inviolability. Most of the young guys I followed in initiating Happenings/Fluxus (the root of Performance Art) soon returned to sculpture and painting; by returning to objects they stabilized the economic direction of their careers (Claes Oldenburg, Jim Dine, Red Grooms stopped performing early on; Al Hansen, Whitman and Allan Kaprow at times present performance or event; the Fluxus artists continue to produce objects and actions. And among the women from my first years in NYC—Yoko Ono, Alison Knowles, Charlotte Moorman, Martha Minujin, Yayoi Kusama, myself—an admixture of objects, installations and actions persisting).

6) I began shooting my erotic film, *Fuses* in 1964. Since my deepest expressive and responsive life core was considered obscene, I thought I better see what it looked like in my own vision. I had never seen any erotica or pornography that approached what lived sexuality felt like. I taught myself to film with a borrowed wind-up Bolexes: that meant any lovemaking sequence would have thirty seconds of film time. The need to see, to confront sexual shibboleths was also an underlying motive for my performance *Interior Scroll* (1975). I didn't want to pull a scroll out of my vagina and read it in public—but the culture's terror of my making overt what they would suppress fuelled the image: it was essential to demonstrate this lived action against the abstraction of the female body and its loss of meanings:

I first wrote about "vulvic space" in 1960 as a result of an art history assignment on symbolism. I chose to do research on the "Transmigration of the Serpent," never suspecting that the transmutation of serpent symbolism in the wall paintings, carvings, inscriptions of ancient cultures—this traditionally "phallic" symbolism would lead me a concept of vulvic space and this in turn to the disappearance and mis-attribution of Goddess artifacts and imagery, to a total inversion and re-interpretation of myth and symbol. Once begun my studies continued as a "secret project," for nothing at that time confirmed the interrelations I saw and the fury and anguish they inspired (the relief of substantiation by Gould Davis, Gertrude Levy, H.R. Hays, Helen Diner, etc. ten or twelve years later was indescribable). Nevertheless it was usually the works of male scholars who first intensified my study—both by keys, links they established, and by denials and obscurations. In Mackenzie I read that: Cro-Magnon people

believed in a Mother Earth Goddess; their cave paintings exaggerate the female sexual characteristics. Water and wind were of fundamental importance and were symbolized by natural spirals. The snake symbolized whirlpool, whirlwind, cosmic energy. Snakes originally symbolized the cosmic energy of the female womb, which protected and nourished the embryos they believed the ocean originally did the earth (school notes from Mackenzie's *The Migration of Symbols*). From my identification with the symbolism of the female body I made the further assumption that carvings and sculptures of the serpent form were attributes of the Goddess and would have been made by women worshippers (artists) as analogous to their own physical, sexual knowledge. I thought of the vagina in many ways—physically, conceptually: as a sculptural form, an architectural referent, the source of sacred knowledge, ecstasy, birth passage, transformation. I saw the vagina as a translucent chamber of which the serpent was an outward model: enlivened by its passage from the visible to the invisible, a spiraled coil ringed with the shape of desire and generative mysteries, attributes of both female and male sexual powers. This source of "primary knowledge" would be symbolized as the primary index unifying spirit and flesh in Goddess worship. I related womb and vagina to "primary knowledge"; with strokes and cuts on bone and rock by which I believed my ancestor measured her menstrual cycles, pregnancies, lunar observations, agricultural notations—the origins of time factoring, of mathematical equivalences, of abstract relations.⁴

Censorship and pornography are blood brothers. We will never find one without the other. If my paintings, photographs, film, and enacted works have been judged obscene the question arises: is this because I use the body in its actuality—without contrivance, fetishization, displacement? Is this because the photographic works are usually self-shot without an "external" controlling eye? And are these works obscene because I posit my female body as a locus of autonomy, pleasure, desire; and insist that as an artist I can be both image and image-maker—merging two aspects of self deeply fractured in the contemporary imagination?



Carolee Schneemann's *Fuses*

7) The prohibition of performance works with anti-Vietnam themes was most extreme: closing out an audience for my Kinetic Theater piece, *Illinois Central*, (Chicago, 1968) involved the USIA, the fire department, police, local real estate and sponsoring staff and trustees of the Museum of Contemporary Art. *Illinois Central* developed from my anti-Vietnam war performance *Snows*, which I described as:

Snows was built out of my anger, outrage, fury, and sorrow for the Vietnamese. The performance contained five films whose related content triggered juxtaposition of a winter environment and Vietnam atrocity images. Of all the films *Viet-Flakes* was the heart and core of the piece: a source of confirmation and insistence from which movement and related imagery spilled onto the "snow-bound" audience.⁵

Snows was performed at the Martinique Theater, Greeley Square in New York City as part of Angry Arts Week. A collaboration with Bell Telephone Labs permitted the development of an electronic switching system so that audience reactions could trigger electrical relays to activate the 16mm projectors edging the stage, the tape decks with collaged sound, revolving lights, and in turn the cues of the six performers. Central to *Snows* was my film *Viet-Flakes*: composed from an obsessive collection of Vietnam atrocity images, clipped from newspapers and foreign magazines over a five year period. Close-up lenses and magnifying glasses were taped to an 8mm camera lens to physically "travel" within the photographs producing a rough animation. *Snows* was influential in heightening moral outrage at the war. And while this Kinetic Theater work was not "censored" in any apparent way I believe its reputation prepared the disastrous

interferences and closure of subsequent presentations of *Illinois Central*. In Chicago a full complement of permits and city approvals was finally not sufficient to keep the fire department from moving out an audience of 200 people about to enter the abandoned bakery loft we had struggled to prepare for several weeks (with a 360 degree slide relay projection of Illinois horizons by Art Sinsabaugh juxtaposed with my slides of devastated Vietnam landscapes).

Illinois Central later toured in the East Coast (as part of "Inter Media '68" produced by John Brockman). At the Brooklyn Academy of Music our performance was disrupted by screaming "plants" (police provocateurs) and provoked a fist fight in the audience. Other forms of sabotage dogged the tour.

What agency was behind passing out hundreds of cups of "Sangria" laced with acid as I was directing an International Festival in London, '69 in honor of the Chicago Eight? (Abbie Hoffman, Dave Dellinger, Jerry Rubin, Bobby Seale, Tom Hayden, Rennie Davis, Lee Weiner, and John Froines arrested on Trial for protesting police brutality at the Chicago Democratic Convention, organizing moratoriums, sit-ins, actions, etc.) Newsreels, films, performances, musicians, staff dissolved in acid chaos.⁹

While my film *Fuses* has had rather consistent censorship surrounding its showings (despite its special award in Cannes '68, and at the Yale Film Festival '72), an exhibite also provoked defensive measures. Disclaimers had to be positioned at the Gallery entrance to Real Art Ways. (Conn. 1981) for my exhibit *Image/Text*; photo-text works were removed from a group exhibit in Philadelphia; offending flyers were removed from the Whitney Down Town *Nothing But Nudes* exhibit in 1977! Implicit—not overt—censorship closets exclusion from exhibits, being denied grants, teaching positions and the suppression of publicity and controversy itself.¹⁰

8) It's interesting that last year, twenty-four years after *Fuses* was made it could be both censored and uncensored at the 1989 Moscow Film Festival, and receive its most intensive structural analysis in David James' *Allegories of Cinema*—an analysis in which my motives and methods are fully contextualized (complimenting Scott MacDonald's *A Critical Cinema*). *Fuses* was included in an American/Soviet Joint Venture (ASK) program for the Moscow Film Festival, *Sexuality in American Films*. (The USA selections were made by the San Francisco International Film Festival, which has had a long association with the Soviet KINO). This program presented Philip Kaufman's *Unbearable Lightness of Being* (as a feature); and the sidebar of "Sexuality in American Films" including *Trash* by Paul Morrissey, *Working Girls* by Lizzie Borden, *She's Gotta Have It* by Spike Lee, Russ Meyers' *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, *Desert Hearts* by Donna Deitch, *Sex, Lies, and Videotape* by Jim Soderbergh, Mark Huestis' program on AIDS, Obie Benz's *Heavy Petting*, and three shorts by James Broughton. Only *Fuses*, after an opening night unscheduled screening, was cancelled from subsequent planned screenings, (and was finally screened unannounced after pressure from the USA organizers). Among all the "Sexuality in American Films," *Fuses* hit a taboo button in Perestroika.

In the USA and the Soviet Union, patriarchal gender constructions systematize transference and mythification lurking within the idealization of the arts. We are looking at different forms of denial/censorship: one form instigates public outrage, outcry; the other acts as a slow smothering, a constraint. In the former instance (USA) you might have to fight for the immediate fate of your work; in the latter (Soviet) you have to wait it out, persist, live in the basement ...

9) Censorship breaks your integrity; it's sinister because the work is endangered and engaged in a falsification of motive. In Moscow I was struggling against invisible powers and was always the fool because I didn't know where my enemy was. The Russian organizers were cordial, gracious and every day they had increasingly unbelievable stories as to why the showing of *Fuses* was postponed or cancelled. I was fortunate to have a translator who became a defender, aggressive on behalf of the film. Every time *Fuses* was diverted he would arrange for T.V. and journalists to be present; we would have interviews about "pornography." There seemed no context to support a female erotic vision.

One T.V. interview was under the direction of a small, round woman in her sixties who arrived at my hotel room with a full crew. She was the head of "Sexual Education in the Soviet Union." She would introduce the interview, then Vladimir, my translator, would translate her questions; he would then translate my response. She was smiling approvingly, looking into my eyes as she spoke into the microphone. "What's she saying?" I asked Vladimir ... he paused ... "She's saying you are a pornographer and a dangerous woman."

Critical neglect and curatorial attempts to obliterate or trivialize my images and materials, are forms of censorship against my work that I continue to confront in North America but if I had lived in the Soviet Union, there would have been no chance to even conceive of or produce works such as *Fuses*.¹¹

Censorship is usually anonymous—you never see the source exactly. Censorship is wily and often capricious. Without question many of my works of the past fifteen years were realized with grants from the NEA—fabrication, presentation in sponsoring spaces (also supported with NEA funds). Performances, films, sculptural installations, could all have been considered erotically or politically objectionable at some level of our society. No other Western industrialized country treats art with our degree of paternalistic suspicion, envy, greed (to possess) and a fitful "allowance." (On a recent radio talk program a man called in and stated "The whole attack on the NEA is a smoke screen ... we don't have any more Commies to distract us from government corruptions, so let's go after the artists.")

To what extent does erotic content subvert the formal properties of my work? Can its sexual base penetrate existing aesthetic issues with new meanings? The disavowal and proscription of "essentialism" by academic critics has left much of my recent work in suspension. Are there structures of evasion within feminist analysis, the entry of the female erotic body into semiotic discourse? Is the critical neglect of my recent work a form of censorship? For instance, the installation *Venus Vectors*, in which the unraveling of two (menstrual) dream symbols situates a visual morphology of vulvic form. The investigation of the

dream-umbrella and the dream-bouquet of flowers produced (between 1981 & 1988) research, a lecture, a performance, and finally a large transparent sculpture. Built of radiating glass panels on which the "vocabulary" of forms is printed, the sculpture incorporates video monitors in which the originating performance unfolds. Shown at Everson Museum, *Sacred Spaces* exhibit 1988, and at the Emily Harvey Gallery 1989; there was no critical discussion of this major work.¹²

Or what of total critical neglect of a recent photo series that raises issues of "appropriate eroticism," inter-species communication. Self-shot over six years to examine images of my cat Cluny and myself, *Infinity Kisses*, composes a wall of images 9' x 12'. The inverted slide images printed in xerachrome introduce permutations of repeated form as time process; rhythms of convexity, concavity, eroticize, the shapes surrounding the joined human and animal mouths.¹³

10) Censorship is flexible, responsive nowadays, mobile, adaptive—boundaries of prohibitions are shifted, re-defined. Women artists have been censored by exclusion for centuries. But what about the OTHER "OTHERS?"—artists so socially marginalized, ignored as to elude acceptable controversy and its possible censorship? While a few of us are bathed in (or blinded by) the lights of a concerned media, entire "outreach" teaching programs, local galleries, studio spaces in the non-glamorous places we title "barrio," "ghetto," "reservation," "inner cities," have already been cut from funding and cease to exist, much less make trouble.

The NEA as a government institution is subject to capture by the most rigid, authoritarian powers it represents. We who are about to be censored (yet again) have re-established our community to consider the artists among us who are denied overt censorship—relegated to obscurity even before they make their marks. Desirable ethnicity, radical politics, "color," social issues which challenge economic ethics disguised as aesthetic issues, may still be denied a place in deepening the discourse. If the NEA is to function as an arm of oppression against the erotic, outrageous women, homos, lesbians, blacks, yellows, reds, jews, the blues (movies)—a palette of denial swirls into a political mist ... A fantastic paranoia floods our vision.

WE WHO ARE ADDRESSING THE TABOOS BECOME THE TABOO. THE SUPPRESSORS ARE CONFUSED. THEY CANNOT DISTINGUISH IMAGES FROM THE IMAGE MAKERS.

Carolee Schneemann
November 1990

Endnotes:

- 1 Schneemann, Carolee, *Cezanne, She Was A Great Painter - Unbroken Words to Women*, Trespass Press, New York, 1975.
- 2 Schneemann, *More Than Meat Joy—Complete Performance Works: Selected Writings*, Documentext/McPherson & Co., New York, 1979, "Eye Body," p. 52.
- 3 Lippard, Lucy, *Overlay*, Pantheon, New York, 1983. (See pp. 63-67 on prehistoric imagery.)
- 4 C.S., *MTMJ*, "Interior Scroll," p. 234.
- 5 C.S., *MTMJ*, "Snows," p. 129.
- 6 On trial for "obstructing justice" and "causing riots," the Chicago Eight refused to follow protocol—they wouldn't shut up. Bobby Seale—the one black member—was brought to court gagged and chained, on orders of Judge Julius Hoffman. (See Cott, Jonathan, "Play Power in London," *Rolling Stone*, 19 March 1970 (on London Festival 1970).
- 7 Roth, Moira, *The Amazing Decade*, Astro Artz, Los Angeles, 1983, (see p. 130 on Brooklyn Museum performance, "HOME RUN MUSE," which suddenly lost its spacious Rotunda to assure security for an adjunct museum dinner party for Henry Kissinger on the same day).
- 8 James, David, *Allegories of Cinema - American Film in the Sixties*, Princeton University Press, 1989, pp. 317-321. MacDonald, Scott, *A Critical Cinema - Interviews with Independent Filmmakers*, University of California Press, 1988, pp. 134-151.
- 9 Elder, Bruce, *The Body in Film*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 1989, (Wilhelm Reich influence on C.S., pp. 34-36.)
- 10 Sayre, Henry, *The Object of Performance - The American Avant-Garde since 1970*, The University of Chicago Press, 1989, (see his essay on "Fresh Blood - A Dream Morphology" performance, pp. 166-173).
- 11 Peterson, William, "Of Cats, Dreams, And Interior Knowledge - Interview with Carolee Schneemann," pp. 10-23 on criticism and history *Performance* #59 (Winter 1989-90), London.

Letter by Bruce Elder

April 1, 1991

Dear Dr. Henderson;

I am sorry that it has taken me so long to respond to your letter. I am at work on four new films (all of which contain a few bits of Pound's *Cantos*, by the way); two of them had a strict and too-near deadline that has made my life simply an agony for the last six months.

I wish I understood exactly what your needs are. Unfortunately, I have culled tiny bits and pieces from throughout the *Cantos* and presented them in an order that has much more to do with the form of the work I am making than with the integrity of the structure Pound gave us. Moreover, the quotes appear in various forms: as supertitles, overlaid on images; as intertitles, presented between images; as texts read by an actor (myself) before the camera; in sound-collages, usually accompanied by a welter of other sounds. Because most of the films are very long, there are usually many quotations. I think you wouldn't really be interested in a complete list, as it would run on. (Am I wrong about this?) Furthermore, passages of *The Book of All the Dead* refer back and forward to other passages within it so specific phrases from the *Cantos* become associated in *The Book of All the Dead* with particular images, memories, and landscapes. It seems pointless to try to cite what portion of the *Cantos* appears where; for it is as though, in the making of *The Book of All the Dead*, an Ur-form of the *Cantos* had been shattered, the fragments spread out over a thousand different places and the material from all these places reassembled in an order that, I hope, at once makes them new and preserves the meanings they had before they were broken. That Gnostic apothegm that Harold Bloom uses to open Wallace Stevens: *The Poems of Our Climate*—"Everything that can be broken should be broken"—and his supplementary formulae, "It must be broken; it must not bear having been broken; and it must seem to have been mended"—is the most precise and simple truth I know about making art. At the same time, it is the pitpiest statement of the phases in the creation of an authentic self; to create either a poem or an authentic self, we must experience language or the self as "un-whole," we must experience the appalling truth that meaning or evidence of the self is lacking, must be familiar with the withdrawal of fullness into emptiness and the estrangement of what is most intimate and know of the lack of ratio between knowledge and desire, just as we must know of death, of the death of love, the death of desire, and the death of creative power. We must be acquainted with the fact that language and the self are menaced in their existence by the *apeiron*, they are adrift (truly are driftworks) in the Limitless. But the discovery of real truth of finitude takes place when limits seem to disappear, and one confronts the Unbounded Abyss. One who lives with the knowledge of death, of the deaths of love, desire and creative power abhides from moment to moment with the horrible question, "Am I still a Poet?" and so must constantly reaffirm his or her vows. This question surely fuels the urge to make and to remake. A compositional method based on appropriation, allusion, quotation and intertextual reference is one response to the terrible doubts this question instills in anyone whose self is identified with Creative Power. The breaking of the whole, the election of the fragment, and its transformation in an utterly new whole describes the identical of phases in the process of both incorporation of intertextual reference and self-development. But it also helps to one to arrive at an answer to another chilling question provoked by acquaintance with the death of love—"Can I ever again love another as once I loved?" The identification of one's own creativity with another's, and the taking of another's powers for oneself is a means, indisputably Freudian, of coping with the impact of this question.

Thus, *The Book of All the Dead* has made passages of Pound its own, just as it has made passages of Martin Heidegger and Simone Weil its own. (The only text that appears in *The Book of All the Dead* that resists this way of being handled is The Bible.) But Pound's work and thought have been incorporated into *The Book of All the Dead* in more ways than just quotation. Pound's poetics have had a fundamental effect on the forms of constructions I have used.

The following may be of some use to you, without overburdening you with an unmanageable mound of details. The films about which you have asked are parts of an epic cycle entitled, as you have no doubt gathered, *The Book of All the Dead*. The major inspiration for the cycle is Dante's *Divina Commedia*. Like Dante's great poem, my epic operates on several levels. One level—a level Dante would have called the literal—is an historical one. (Like Pound, then, I wanted to create a work that would include history.) In particular, *The Book of All the Dead* is concerned with history's collapse into inedemity, where, I sometimes have feared, it shall remain frozen in the dystopic realization of Hegel's universal, homogeneous state. On a philosophical (allegorical) level, it is concerned with the question of how consciousness came to its present state and, more broadly, with questions concerning the fate of consciousness. On a theological (anagogic) level, it is concerned with the possibility of recovering those capacities of consciousness, now lost, that once enabled it to dwell in the light of the Good. The individual's quest that the personal or moral level of the cycle presents parallels Pound's own for the "paradiso terrestre," and suggests, finally that the only way to recreate the *paradiso terrestre* is to understand and act on the maxim that "a man's paradise is his good nature." But, as the gnostics well knew, our good nature derives from the High Holy One; and it was not just the Gnostics alone who knew this—after all, it is the point of the Judeo-Christian creation myth's having God create humans in His own image.

Moreover, like the *Divina Commedia*, *The Book of All the Dead* offers a description of stages in the transformation of consciousness, from ordinary waking consciousness (*The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, which title I keep misspelling in the credits as "The Art of WORD-ly Wisdom" in order to suggest the conventional nature of the knowledge the film presents), through consciousness of the workings of the awesome Divine within ordinary (*1857: Fool's Gold*), through the purging of our dreadful condition—i.e. from Hell into Purgatory (*Illuminated Texts*), to comprehension of Pound's "repeat in time," i.e. the purgatory of human error (*In the Dream of the Last Historian*—for, after all, it is recognition of the historical repeat that puts an end to history's terrible vector so eloquently described in the Henry Adams sections of *Illuminated Texts*—and, into parts of *The Sublime Calculation*) and sporadic, faltering beginnings of the contemplation of the love that leads one out of Purgatory (*In Consolations (Love is an Art of Time)*), first in its mode of absence (*In The Fugitive Gods*), then in the mode of possibility-to-be-made-once-again-present—in *The Lighted Clearing*, and especially in *The Body and the World*), and, finally, the various stages of the beatific vision, beginning with an acknowledgement of the terrible powers of love (*In Flesh Angels*), the eschewing of intellectual love (*In Newton and Me*—a title intended to both disjoin us [as many people, including William Blake have thought of Newton] as the exemplar of Reason and Intellectual Contemplation of the Divine] and to join, as Newton forsook that paradigmatic activity of reason to reflect on apocalyptic literature); I also intend the title of this section of *The Book of All the Dead* to suggest the beginning of a new, and dynamic cosmology), to the peace of discovering the Divine Love in higher vision (*In Azure Serene: Mountains, Rivers, Sea and Sky*) to the exalted knowledge of the love that permeates all things and sustains all things in their being, in *Exultations (In Light of the Great Giving)*. Furthermore, the spiritual education the work describes is similar to that which Dante's *Commedia* presents—the growth towards the insight that all that is given in experience truly is a gift; though some of our experiences, like nightmare monsters wrought in the dark, may seem like cruel repayments for our efforts to find God, even such cruel succubi turn out to disclose the Being of Goodness, if we wait long enough. Consciousness of the significance of the particular is enlarged until, at last, the poetry of experience is awakened, and an emotional experience is called forth that awakens one to our oneness with our circumstance, i.e., with that which stands around us.

Just as Lucia in Dante's great epic initiates the Poet into Purgatory with a grace that initiates the process of metanoia, so the coming of love in *Consolations* begins a process of transformation. I have frequently described *The Book of All the Dead* as a work about the destitution of our time, when the Holy has departed and we live without an understanding of the sacred. And how did Dante describe his times in *Doglia mi reca* ("Grief makes me bold")?

Men have cut themselves off from virtue—no,
not men, but evil beasts in men's likeness. O God,
how strange—to choose to fall from master to
slave, from life to death

I hasten to add that an important difference between *The Book of All the Dead* and the *Divina Commedia* is that unlike Dante, I do not believe that freedom is the natural state of the soul; rather, like the blessed Spinoza I believe that every thing that happens must happen, that the route to tranquillity is the contemplation of necessity and that the route to enlightenment is the wilful submission to necessity. In fact, I accept only a very small part of Dante's neo-Platonism, largely because I find the neo-Platonists' propositions about matter and, in particular, about the body are absolutely unacceptable.) But Pound too believed that we who are living in the modern world have lost our reverence for sacred nature and he too relates this to deeply the anti-artistic animus of modern existence.

The journey that *The Book of All the Dead* describes is not a straight line. It circles back upon itself again and again, even though it steadfastly approaches its destination. Didn't the Pseudo-Areopagite describe the route by which humans approach God as a spiral? There is always the falling back, even as we draw nearer to the goal. But even Dante's epic, while one of the greatest testaments to the power of love, was also a truly a hateful poem. (In this, of course, it is no different from Pound's *Cantos*.) Interpreted as a moral allegory, *The Inferno* is a treatise on sin and a depiction of the punishments appropriate to each of the sins. Some of Dante's punishments are truly ingenious, as for example having soothsayers' heads turned backward; they are a great source of the pleasure we take in those passages in which they appear. Furthermore, those few who continue reading the *Commedia* past *The Inferno* know that there is a turning point in his epic drama, and what at first we, and The Poet, experience as evil we, like he, come to understand as part of the Good.

So is it in *The Book of All the Dead*. *Illuminated Texts*, the very crux of the Hell section in my epic, contains a scene that concerns our desire to invent punishments. Similarly, that film and *Lamentations* present images and texts that convey "the torments the protagonist delights to imagine are visited on his or her enemies." However, these scenes, cruel though they be, do serve the whole, and the whole would not be the same without them. In several of the burlesque scenes in *The Book of All the Dead*, I have strived as well to recreate the rickety, grim, desperate and finally unfunny attempts at humour such as those that appear in canto XXI of *The Inferno* (i.e. the canto whose action takes place by the lake of pitch). For I feel great sympathy with Dante at these moments; it is evident to me that the motivation he had to write was a sense of the inevitability that in all the affairs of humans, justice will not be done.

Furthermore, by choosing Ulysses to represent them, Dante gives very prominent place to those who want to construct an Earthly Paradise unguided by considerations of virtue or the Good. Their spirit is prominent in our own time, for it appears under the sign of technocracy. Accordingly, *The Book of All the Dead* gives them prominence. The idea that a technical form of thinking, not

guided by any consideration of the Good, has become the only form within which we think, and that the loss of other modes of thought known to the ancients is the reason for our destitute condition is absolutely central to *The Book of All the Dead*.

There are also parallels between *The Book of All the Dead* and Dante's oeuvre taken as a whole, including the early love poems and *La Vita Nuova*. Like many of Dante's early poems, many of the earlier parts of my cycle are works that lament love's terrible wounding powers. Then, as Dante did when he began *La Vita Nuova*, I stopped bewailing my personal condition and console myself with poems in praise of love. As Dante did, then, I began, sorrowfully, to sing the praises of "Donne ch'arete intelletto d'amore." (This of course has been a source of much hostility towards the cycle.) Near the end of *The Lighted Clearing*, I reach the state that Dante described in the last poem in *La Vita Nuova*:

Oltre la spera che piu larga giga
Passa" sospira ch'esece del mio core;
intelligenza nova, che l'Amore
piagendo mette in lui, pur su lo tira.

The Book of All the Dead culminates with praises to:

amor che movi tua veru da cielo

In the end, *The Book of All the Dead* depicts its protagonist's consciousness passing over into the conscious love that permeates the universe, as did that of the poet in Dante's *Paradiso*.

Much of *The Book of All the Dead* evokes a tension not unlike that which Dante's epic elicits between carnal love and intellectual love. Like Dante's epic, it seeks after the Love that binds the scattered pages of the universe into one volume, after an understanding of all relations as "*un semplice luce*." And like the conclusion of Dante's epic, the end of *The Book of All the Dead* presents a vision of the cosmos as held together by the three forces of light, reason, and love, which, in the end, are all understood to be identical. As Beatrice tells the Poet that the Empyrean is made up of light, reason and love:

pura luce:
luce intellettuale, piena d'amore;
amor di vero ben, pien di letizia.

(pure light
intellectual light full of love.
love of true good, full of happiness.)

One measure of Pound's strength as a poet was that he came very close to traversing the full range covered by the Poet of Dante's *Commedia*. Guy Davenport points out that Eliot, in "The Wasteland" went with the Poet in his descent into Hell. In "Ash Wednesday" and "The Four Quartets," he stumbled through the Anti-Purgatory into Purgatory itself. Joyce gave our century a depiction of the modern city as Hell in *Ulysses*, and then, in *Finnegans Wake* brought us into a cyclical Purgatory from which there is no escape. Pound alone went the whole stretch, nearly. The great ambition of *The Book of All the Dead*, not to say its colossal arrogance, is to attempt to go the full distance with him, and then to continue past him when he fails, so near to the goal, and to go where only the Poet had been before.

Doubtless you can see, even from this superficial description of *The Book of All the Dead*, that my epic is both thematically and genetically related to Pound's *Cantos*. Like Dante's epic and Pound's, mine begins in the Dark Wood (so described in my catalogue note for *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, a description that, hardly surprisingly, was promptly ignored), whence there begins a journey into the world of the dead (the past and the tradition, including the knowledge that it has piled) in order to acquire the saving knowledge. Like the *Cantos*, too, my epic includes a transformation involving wine, a Renaissance nativity scene, the birth of a goddess from sea foam who comes to be identified with Beatrice, etc. (When will people even begin to see this?) Imagine someone trying to do the *Contos* on film, and taking Heidegger rather than Major C.H. Douglas as the most profound analyst of the desuetude of his or her times, and you would, I believe, generate something like *The Book of All the Dead*.

The similarity of our "epics" extends to the formal methods they employ. For one thing, the montage constructions that I use in *The Book of All the Dead* are based on the ideogrammic method. That method seems to me, as it did to Sergei Eisenstein (who, like Pound, was inspired by the writings of Fenollosa) to suit the film medium, as do most of the other paratactical forms which Pound favoured. One reason they are appropriate to the film medium is that the device relies on the use of concrete particulars. Film's affinity for concrete particulars is one of its special strengths, for through the power of concretion, things bear witness. When things present themselves concretely, as luminous particulars, they manifest the originary *Being* that begets them. Film derives its power from its very similar power of disclosure. Furthermore, the complex associations amongst the particulars presented ideogrammically has something of the density, the complexity, the suggestivity and the mysteriousness of reality. Concrete images activate the imagination, and impel us to undergo feelings. Thus, they confer a rudimentary form of knowledge—or, more exactly, the *basis* of a rudimentary knowledge—for they penetrate us, maintain a witness in memory, and form the feelings from which intuitive knowledge develops. This is why that which has lost touch with particularity is untrustworthy. "Go in fear of abstraction," was Pound's counsel, I recall.

Pound noted that capacity of the ideogrammic method to speak concretely of universal powers. The juxtaposition of an image of the sun and the moon reveals "the total light process, the radiation, reception, and reflection of light; hence the intelligence. Bright, brightness, shining." Between two details a meaning is discerned, and what is depicted in these two details is discovered to be as dependent on what relates them as the meaning of the composite sign is upon the

written strokes that support that meaning. It is everything that Eisenstein said—through the juxtaposition of two elements in montage, a new thing arises that is not present in elements taken either individually or serially—and more, for the materialism that Eisenstein espoused in at least his first years as aesthetician, prevented him from acknowledging the constitutive role of mind in the process—or, for that matter, from admitting the crucial role that the process of discerning a meaning between two juxtaposed particulars plays in the very constitution of mind itself.

There is another reason why Pound's paratactical method fits film so well. Words, Pound has taught us, are the "primary pigment" of literature. Recognition of their reality, in all its concreteness opened me to the possibility of radical juxtapositions of highly disparate elements, without the use of the "smoothing" factors of syntax. Kenneth Rexroth, a poet whose works I loved before I loved Pound's and whose works I love still, summed up the method best as he commented on the cubist method he used in making his own early poems; it is "the conscious, deliberate dissociation and recombination of elements into a new artistic entity made self-sufficient by its rigorous architecture." The radical decomposition of texts into their component elements, each with its own metre and texture, and the use of no devices that smooth the differences amongst the elements, highlights the material qualities of literature's "primary pigment"; there is strong emphasis on "the word as such,"—on the sign both as material and as representation. Crucial to such an enterprise is a trope that was essential to Pound's own method, viz. ellipsis. The elision of action is a primary feature of the style of *The Book of All the Dead*, as is the use of discontinuous, seemingly abrupt (because "off-meter") transitions.

Thus, in *Illuminated Texts, Lamentations and Consolations*, I have tried to arrange the shots, titles and sounds in my films into patterns in which themes occur and recur in a quasi-fugal form, creating ever new relations amongst the repeating elements. *The Book of All the Dead* presents juxtaposed images and allusions with no narrative or syntactic connection for its "phalanx of particulars," just as "knowledge is built up from a rain of factual atoms ... A scrap here, a scrap there; always pertinent, linked to safety, or nutrition or pleasure" as Pound stated (though, I think, with only partial correctness.) The concatenated texts have different lenses, and operate on various scales—from the personal, to the historical, to the philosophical, to the anagogic. Each particular possesses its own metre. When such various particulars are combined and recombined in shifting juxtapositions meaning is generated, because the form encourages people to discover likenesses among dissimilar and unexpected things. Texts, voices, images, fragments of documents, literary and scientific works are put in a significant order, but it is up to the films' viewers to discover the principles that decide how they are assembled, and why one thing is adjacent to, or near, another. Given two concrete particulars in a sequence, the mind strives to discover their meaning. The effect is also self-reflexive, as the heightened mental activity that viewers experience makes them acutely aware of the conditions of their consciousness, as they explore possible interrelations of meaning among what is presented to them. The difference in meanings a fragment takes on when it appears in different contexts also reveals the dependency of the particular. And, just as life does not comment on the particulars it gives us to experience, neither do the *Cantos*, and neither does *The Book of All the Dead*. The viewer is required to participate in the process through which meaning is constituted. The being of the viewer who constitutes the meaning emerges together with meaning. In the end, subjectivity becomes a function of textuality; the tumult of voices that speaks through the cycle suggests a terrifyingly labile subject whose existence depends upon the apprehension of meaning, moment by moment. This meaning is to be found not in what is in the image or sounds, but what is amongst them. And, just as meaning is not given in the image, the subject is not given to the world, for it is dependent upon and belongs to what is beyond the world.

If the subject is a function of meaning, then the task of composition is the very important one of fashioning what Pound acutely termed "a language to think in." "A language to think in" must be able to present the processes of the mind, the movements of memory, the phenomenological activities of seeing or hearing, of remembering or anticipating, of speculating or fretting—the rapid shifts of attention from moment to moment. The endeavour to construct such a language also involves the examination of language as a system for representing thinking, of the process of inscription itself—examination of the possibilities that film's own "primary pigment" can serve as a system of meanings.

The juxtaposition of different compositional styles, different meters or different intensities is a basic stylistic feature of *The Book of All the Dead*. It serves less to foreground the "primary pigment" that constitutes the material of the work as it does to inventory the potential forms of "a language to think in"—to think in the profoundest way, as these different styles all exhibit that which endures as important. Because the collage of styles makes *The Book of All the Dead* a film about "the language" of film and the language of thought, it has the capacity to criticize both those various styles that constitute it and its own composite style. The limitations inherent with an involvement in concrete particulars is a constant theme of the cycle.

A further effect of "the jostle of voices" presented in the collage that is *The Book of All the Dead* is that its protagonist, like those of the *Contos* and *Powers*, or like Maximus of Gloucester, is fragmented into pieces of text; moments of his or her insight (for like the angels, our protagonist is sexless), appear and disappear amongst a jostle of voices. Epiphanic revelations occur and are swept away in the vortex of more words, from many more speakers. There is no single, unified voice impressed on every utterance in the cycle, and so no single voice that one can identify as the authorial voice. Thus, only in a limited sense is the protagonist of *The Book of All the Dead* modelled after Odysseus of Homer's epic or the Poet of Dante's *Commedia*. The protagonist of *The Book of All the Dead* is more like Intelligence exploring through all the ages to find the way that would lead to its abode, the place where existents are restored to conformity with the Order of Things. He or she spends much of time in Hell, because s/he does not know what it would be to proceed towards home.

Because the protagonist lacks even a clear understanding of where home is and what it is like, there is not much potential for drama in the cycle. I consider this wholly good. Whether in our dealings with art or in our everyday experience, the desire for conflict and drama is a major factor preventing us from engaging in contemplative attention to particulars and from abiding with wonder that which is given as a gift of Be-ing. Hence, I avoid drama in order to avail myself more fully of the process by which form emerges out of the course of experience of things in their concrete particularity. Rather I rely on my faith that in the process of comparing many people, places, civilizations, and many ways of thinking, an order will emerge—one that depends upon the phenomena compared, rather than being imposed on them from the outside. I believe that if one gives his or her attention fully to contemplating the emergent order charted in *The Book of All the Dead*, or in any long work created through this method, he or she would appreciate what comes forth in this order as gifts of Be-ing constituting the order of values. If one can engage with order of values, one will remain true to things in their concrete complexity. The contradictions that arise in experience can be incorporated into the artistic the form that emerges through this process of engaging with the order of values. Hence, form that this emergent order produces can accommodate the spirit that Keats calls negative capability. At the same time, however, the values exposed in repetitions and contrasts in textures between the various parts of the experience the form incorporates provide a coherence to the piece.

This compositional method makes one's life co-extensive with the quest that the work recounts, and so art and life become one for it relies on the faith (what else could it be?) that in the form-making process, a subject does emerge—a voice that, while not the commanding authorial presence of traditional texts, nonetheless coheres. One begins with the faith that in the process of creating the work, one will become the person capable of bringing it to an ending. Like all faith, this faith brings its own rewards, as the *Canos* reveal. A subject does emerge there, most forcefully in *The Pisan Cantos*, which presents the equivalent to Pound's *Paradiso* (though, as is well-known, Pound later expressed, in a very moving fashion, doubts that he really had achieved this state in his spiritual education). I believe that a voice similarly emerges in the *Paradiso* sections of *The Book of All the Dead*, especially in the *Newton and Me* section. (This was one reason I gave it that title.) Furthermore, I believe that this voice arises, as does Pound's, from the midst of crisis. (Thus the adjacency of Hell and Paradise are a theme of these sections of the film, as it is of *The Pisan Cantos*.)

Pound showed me the way towards such a form, and he was astute enough to recognize that the classification procedures of the biologist provide a good metaphor for the process. Pound's remarkable faith in both the form-making and the human-making potential of such a compositional process has been great inspiration to me. His recognition of the advantages of the type of form that emerges from such a creative process has been one his greatest contributions to twentieth-century art and had enormous influence on one of America's greatest poets of more recent times, Charles Olson.

Because the paratactical method presents each moment as nearly autonomous, as distinct from each preceding and succeeding moment, these works possess an open structure. They present themselves, as being "in process," for in their composition they are subject to continual, on-going reassessment. This flux, too, is characteristic of consciousness itself. Yet the method of presenting concrete particulars in *The Book of All the Dead* is not mimetic, any more than it is in the *Cantos*. Eliot, in "The Waste Land," uses fragments to depict the character of modern consciousness, for the serial presentation of the fragments that constitute that work enact the frenetic movement of modern consciousness. Thus, he uses the method of the presentation of fragments to the end of reproducing an interior monologue, the formal features of which are to be taken as a demonstration of the disturbed condition of modern consciousness. I cannot accept Eliot's ideas about "the dissociation of consciousness" upon which he based his practice (though I do believe that consciousness has forsaken certain of its primary powers, including contemplation, by the exercise of which alone the Good can be known.) I think that life has always presented itself to "mind" as fragmentary, incoherent, and inscrutable. But, like Pound, I have ample faith that the world does have meaning and that to know the meaning of the world is to know that what exists is not all that there is. Recognition that we are dependent (something about which the heart's desire to be in bondage speaks unceasingly) leads us beyond what exists to the meaning of the world, for the meaning of the world can be known only from outside the world. This is another reason for my using the ideogrammatic method objectively. Luminous details afford "sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence and law," as Pound noted. Sometimes when this happens the luminous details themselves transform into a background that lights up the conditions that brought them to presence. Something of that which is beyond all presences shows itself, as all that is recedes in a background against which Nothing shows.

The activity in which we contemplate the meaning of the world is prayer. In prayer, we empty our minds of abstract thoughts and give ourselves over wholly to the perception, to seeing a thing for what it is. It is this activity that discloses "the giving of things," the Be-ing through which beings come into presence, and reveals that everything that exists is a gift. It consists in allowing the concrete particular to fill the mind entirely and in giving ourselves over to wonder that it has come to be. This leads us into a state in which we know through feelings that whatever is in world is dependent on what has brought them to be. Feelings inform us that all that we know is wholly contingent, and this feeling for things leads us ultimately into a state in which a significant ratio of beings is grasped, a ratio according to which beings are their meanings as the material support of sign is to its meaning. This is the knowledge that emerges from the contemplation of particulars. Acquaintance with this miracle plays a part in interest in Pound's method of presenting concrete particulars.

Fenollosa pointed out another, very important consequence of the paratactical method, as important to me as it was to Pound: it resists the Western logic of the "schoolmen" who "despised the "thing" as a mere "particular"—something useful only for getting to abstractions. While the ideogrammatic method of presenting concrete particulars in juxtaposition does not commit one to use of

the internal monologue form, it does constitute a way of thinking. The monolinear sequence of logical thinking is only one way of knowing, and its prospects are narrowly circumscribed, as the attempts to model creativity with logical programming languages show. The mind's natural way of knowing is to heap up an assortment of facts, until at last it intuits what connects. This is how we ordinarily learn even a systematic science such as linear algebra or the calculus; we peruse books and articles, reading the parts we like, and after a few months, hardly realizing we were making any effort, we find it easy to find the integral of a complex function. *The Book of All the Dead* is a vast exercise in this form of learning.

I also share Pound's interest in pressing other texts into the service of my own, and I employ the strategy of appropriation in the service of ends that I think Pound also would have been familiar with—for one, of constructing a genealogy of consciousness and, for another, of excavating evidence of modes of consciousness lost to us moderns. The leavings and midden of a civilization amount to only a few snippets of special intelligence. From those bits that come to our cognizance, we attempt to reconstruct the form of thought of that civilization—really, its form of life—rather as an archaeologist attempts to reconstruct an economy, a religion, and a complex web of social conventions from shards of pottery, wooden-carvings, foundation stones, and the like. The formal principle on which this operation is based is synecdoche, and synecdoche is the rule of the procedure that the appearance of the fragment invokes. From the few remnants of the documents a culture produces, we intuit a particular form of the life of the mind, and it becomes for us a living reality. Though the form of life we intuit perhaps is not the same form of life as that which was the fragment's provenance, still, as Pound realized, we can have faith (for it has been borne out again and again) that a few dozen luminous details give us a better sense of the intelligence of the period in a way than can be gleaned even from an enormous number of inert pieces of information. Despite appearing outside of their original context—a context that undoubtedly contributed to their meaning—the luminous details left to us by the incendiary intelligences of their time retain the power to inform us. This is not because their significance has been trapped in their form as a fly is been trapped, forever unchanging, in amber. Their illuminative power depends on their being complexly integrated unities. The persistence of their truths, as abraded by time as they may be, is the result of the persistence of the patterns through which these complex unities emerge. Though time demands that these details pay it homage, both in their appearance and their disappearance, the power of these fine details to reveal the workings of *Be-ing* are not lessened as they are obscured; for, in spite of everything, they are perfect wholes that belong to another order than that which was the site of their origination, and so draw those who attend to them contemplatively into the lighted clearing of their *Be-ing*. The withdrawal of once-present meaning is only further testimony to the workings of time and *Be-ing*, which advances through retreating and is unconcealed as present existents, or once-present meanings, withdraw into concealment. The truths these complexly integrated wholes disclose thus are not those of an *arche* or origin; rather they are truths disclosed in their distance from their origins, an origin that can never be recovered. (Our inability to return to the origin was a major theme of my film *Lamentations: A Monument to the Dead World*.) In the same way that the power of language to call things into their ordained order discloses, to those who attend to the gaps and absences and silences within language, what is concealed by the vocation that issues forth from language, namely Nothing, the distance of the fragment from its unrecoverable origin shows us the forfeiture implicit in things" coming-to-be, a sacrifice which (recalling that today is the beginning of Lent) is indeniably productive and creative. The antitheses order/disorder and beings/Nothing are disclosed just at the moment when they come to pass; thereafter there is only the forgetting and oblivion of the *Be-ing* which first brought on this event. But as I kept suggesting in *Consolations (Love is An Art of Time)*, the sacrifice is associated with the gift, as is the gift with a sacrifice: so the re-collection of the fragments of texts whose first meanings no longer present themselves shows the power of time through which they first were. It shows the errancy of *Be-ing*, for it makes manifest features of language's relation to time and *Be-ing* that would remain forever in concealment were it not for the forfeits of time, for the testimony to time that the fragment bears, and bears just because it is "un-wholed." In the same manner as the order of language always testifies to disorder, chaos, and Nothing, creation is always accompanied by destruction; those destructive questions I began with, and the Nothingness they bring us to confront, are necessary to creative activity. All of this is revealed by compositional processes that are based on the destruction of an original textual integrity, the selection of some of the resulting fragments and recreation of a textual unity that incorporates the fragments—that is, by a compositional process based on intertextual reference. Such a compositional method is thus destructive, for it disperses, dismantles and liquates beings in bringing once-present meaning to Nothing. It thus enables renewal and re-creation, in the most profound sense of that word.

Thus, what is at stake in the collage of quotations and allusions I have constructed is more than the simultaneous presence in a film of various represented times—more even than any theory of time which that co-presence might suggest, though both those are important. The incorporation of various forms of consciousness transforms a work of art into a meta-work (of a 2nd or nth order work that both incorporates and reflects on earlier works in “the tradition”); it is the particular power of a meta-work to demonstrate how enduring certain patterns of intelligence are.

The very idea that there are advantages to be gained by recreating the forms of antecedent works I formed on the basis of a Poundian precedent. Pound discussed the vortex as a pattern of energy made visible to us by reason "our kinship to the vital universe of fluid force." He realized that the mind of the West, that which we ordinarily call Tradition, is made up of semi-stable patterns of energy. As fresh minds create in new circumstances, with new materials, the same complexly integrated wholes occur and recur. Such patterns of intelligence we call by the names Odysseus, Romulus and Remus, the Bridegroom, Helen, Roland, and Thomas. Particularities differ, details of the configurations change, but the patterns remain essentially the same. The

brave one who longs to return home, the city's founder, the lover, the one men long for and pay the price of that longing. "Hast thou seen the rose in the steel dust?" Thus Hölder's *Nekuia*, his tale of visiting the ancient archaic bards in the land of the dead was put into Latin in the 16th century by one Andreas Divus Justinopolitanus. It chants out, "Et postquam ad nemem descendimus, ei mare..." Pound purchased a copy of *Divus*' translation at a bookstall on a quay in Paris. The vortex whirled.

The *Book of All the Dead*, accordingly, is not a version of Dante (or of Pound) but a demonstration of the endurance of a particular pattern of intelligence—a pattern to which we might give the name Nekuia after Hömer's text concerning a journey to the place of the dead and a visit with ancient bards. Dante is another manifestation of the stable pattern of the energy of intelligence. Dante's *Commedia* is another manifestation of the same stable pattern, the *Cantos* are another, and *The Book of All the Dead* yet another. But my cycle is not only a manifestation of this energy pattern, it is also about it, and it is because it is about this pattern of energy that it has so ironic a texture. This is also the reason why *The Book of All the Dead* is a very allusive, almost as allusive as the *Cantos* themselves. It contains allusions to literary works, to the sacred places of the epic tradition, to history, to philosophy and to religion. Many of these allusions take the form of direct incorporation. The incorporation is accomplished by the cinematograph. The cinematograph itself is a manifestation of the Intelligence of an age—an age that now is rapidly receding into the past. But it has also become a form in which we think; this form, brought forth from the intelligence of a age, became the form in the thoughts that made it move were recorded. More than that, it gave form to the thoughts of the age that emerged when it was given birth. Our age's self-knowledge is given form by the moving images in which we have attempted to embody most inward thoughts and feelings. As the Intelligence of our age and the agency through which we discover our inner being, the cinematograph has looked outward to history that constituted its fate and so it now, in its own inner being, reflects the patterns that perdure through history. Thus it is that now our personal experience has become part of that which is "now in the mind indomitable," as Pound put it.

The film that includes history thus contains more than elements in recurrence; it also figures an Uniting Intelligence in which, occasionally, our own minds are able to participate and so to discover the Order of Things. It reveals the transfiguring power of Intelligence, that by which all particulars are made an everlasting one. Works that manifest the enduring patterns of Intelligence themselves join a semi-permanent order of existence. Because they partake of some features of those enduring Order of Things, they have the power to console us. A work like Pound's *Cantos* and, I hope, my own *The Book of All the Dead*, manifest the co-existence of works in this higher Order of Things and the co-presence of all such works even in the intelligence of our own miserably destitute times. This is a reason for thanksgiving.

Pound's ambition to create a work that could serve as a compendium of all that, socially and spiritually, it is useful to know also fascinates me. Pound was characteristically precise and profound when he defined knowledge as what remains when all the facts are forgotten. We can reconcile the apparent paradox inherent in the combination of his insistence on the importance of particulars and this definition only by recognizing that the concrete existent is important only as manifestation of the power of the Be-ing that has brought it into presence. The best part of this knowledge of thing is of how things correlate and of what ties them together. I have attempted to convey something of this power in the tumult of voices and images that make up *The Book of All the Dead*. Without the example of Pound's *Cantos* I should never even have imagined how to attempt this. *The Book of All the Dead* is thus a palimpsest. But so too are Dante's *Commedia* and Pound's *Cantos* (Pound's *Cantos* XXIV-XXVI, which present the hellish lack of reverence for sacred nature, the consequent corruption of art by unnatural greed, sloth and ruthlessness, and even the blighting of natural human affection by unnatural ruthlessness, are written over scenes from Dante's *Inferno*) and we may well cite this feature of Pound's work as evidence of the Dantesque influence.

Dante drew both themes and words from Virgil for his *Commedia* especially for his passages concerning the descent into Hell, passages in which Virgil, not insignificantly, reshapes a tradition and a text he got from Homer, from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus visits the shades, but recast them, fashioning a Christian significance out of them. Dante used several other classic autors, most notably Ovid, similarly, if not as extensively. Pound understood this and highlighted the fact. Thus an Ovidian second canto follows his Homeric/Virgilian first canto. What is more, Pound makes clear that it is not a straightforwardly Homeric/Virgilian beginning, but one that begins with Homer. And yet—and this is one of Pound's more brilliant turns in his opening performance—he realizes that though we read Homer in the original, his text appears to us only mediately, for those writers in the Western tradition that overwrote Homer's text, principally Dante, have forever changed how the original text comes to us. This is one of the features that makes all successful allusions acts of overwriting; there is no such thing as a simple reference between texts, nothing of the sort of thing that poststructuralists call intertextuality, for the later text always corrupts the original by overwriting it. This is why I refer to allusive texts as palimpsest.

But one should not think that because the texts, images and sounds that appear in *The Book of All the Dead* overwrite other texts, that it therefore without personal significance. In fact, the context from which texts, images and sounds come can give them added emotional weight. Consider the title page of T.S. Eliot's *Fatuus and Other Observations*. On it, there appears a dedication "For Jean Verdenal, 1889-1915, mort aux Dardanelles, and then a quotation, in italics:

la quantitate
Puote veder del arnor che a te mi scalda,
Quando dismetto nostra vanitate
Trattando l'ombre come cosa salda.

It appears just so, untranslated—one presumes in order to conceal feelings that otherwise might appear too raw or might overwhelm him if he allowed them to show, just as Pound often uses foreign terms in the *Cantos* to avert us from discovering him in a moment of emotional vulnerability. What are the feelings that Eliot felt the need to conceal? The text says something like: "You can see how great my love for you is when I ignore our emptiness and treat a shade as the real thing." If that were all there were to the quotation, and if we had to take it literally rather than allusively, its message would be that Eliot so loved Verdenal that he refuses to accept that he is gone, and treats him as though he were still alive. Most of us are acquainted from our early years with such pathos and so, even taken this way, it is not without strength. But how much greater its power is when we recognize the provenance of the quotation. It is from Dante; it appears in *Divina Commedia* on the occasion of the most moving of the many joyous meetings that it depicts. Statius, a Christian poet of late antiquity, meets Dante and the Poet, without knowing whom he has met. He tells them:

Al mio ardor fuor seme le faville,
che mi scaldar, de la divina fiamma
onde sono alumati più di mille;

de l'Eneida dico, la qual mamma
fummi, e fummi nutritre, poetando:
sanzessa non fermai peso di dramma.

E per esser vivuto di là quando
vise Virgilio, assentirei un sole
più che non deggio al mio uscir di bando.

Or, approximately,

The sparks that warmed me, the seeds of my ardour,
were from the holy fire—the same that gave
more than a thousand poets light and flame.

I speak of the Aeneid; it was mother to me,
and it was curse to me as a poet;
my work without it would not amount to an ounce in weight.

And to have lived on earth when Virgil lived—
for that I would extend by a whole revolution of the sun
the time I owe before the end of my exile (*Purgatorio* xxi, 92-102)

Statius notices a smile on the Poet's face, and despite Virgil's request that he keep quiet, he tells Statius the reason. Statius is awestruck, and Virgil instructs him: "Fratre, i non far, ché tu se" ombra e ombra vedi." ("Brother, do not do so, for you are a shade, and it is shade that you see." *Purg.* xxi 131-132.) That is when Statius replies, "And now you can understand how much I love when I forget our emptiness, and treat a shade as someone real." Knowing the context makes the quotation heart-rending, for we then understand something about the relationship Eliot had with Verdenal, and this understanding enables us to feel more of the passion that Eliot harboured for him. Remembering that Dante's main reason for introducing the figure of Statius was to use him to present an account of the conversion experience almost exactly like that St. Augustine described in his *Confessions* only makes it all the more poignant still.

The art that I practice is often called cinema. Would it be surprising, then, that I find appealing that aspect of Pound's work that Olson has elaborated upon: his interest in the KINETICS of the art? The movement of existent, how beings are transformed in every moment of their existence, fascinates me. Fascination with speed and with compression has made me use elision to the utmost extent that I can conceive. The energy transmitted by the unfinished unit to the reader, who picks up the momentum of forward drive intrigues me for I believe this momentum excites feelings that, under the right conditions, can turn into knowledge. Pound couched his definition of the vortex in terms of energy. I am fascinated by the moving image's flow of energy and awestruck by the potential for EVERY MOMENT in a film to be a Vortex whirled in the larger Vortex that is the whole film, for every moment of a film to spin a myriad of sounds, words and images and through itself. Through a single image circulate number of different times—the time when the image is seen, the time when it was shot, the time when the text that is overlaid onto image was written, and even the "whole time" when the construction of image-text-sound was assembled (i.e. its entire cultural context) in relation to our own time. Thus paratactical constructions replace the single moment that, according to the conceits of the lyrical poem is the eternal and unchanging (never-passing) "Now," with a multiplicity of fugitive moments, as each moment surges into presence and then rushes away. The work constructed on the principle of parataxis therefore must accept to dwell on earth. But it is through beings that know Be-ing, after all. Parataxis suits the epic form (coincidence between structure and technique) because the paratactical must come down out of the heavens and open itself to history, to change and to death. It accepts the force of the negative as the lyrical work does. Yet, at the same time, if the abundance of energies succeeds, then these times are all made one and the work manifests the energies of Being coming to presence in beings and events. Unfortunately, they succeed all too rarely, but how delicious it is when they do!

Pound's rhythmic, too, have been a major source of inspiration for my filmmaking. Of particular importance has been Pound's advice to allow lines and even phrases to follow the rhythm of the musical phrase, not of the metronome. It is empty counsel, in a sense, for even musical phrases can, and most often do, follow a strict metre that is as unbending as the tick of the metronome. That most glorious of interpreters of Bach, Glenn Gould, has given us marvellous proof of how strictly Bach's metres and tempi should be kept, of how out of place rubato is in performing Bach's work and Baroque music generally. Even more important, he has allowed us to glimpse the reason

for that strictness, that strict form of the music, as precise as the order of number, reflects the Order of Being. But Pound was speaking polemically, probably in response to practice of the period just before his own, a period that resonated with the hoof-beat of a Algernon Charles Swinburne's (a poet he admired and I detest) thumping rhythms:

Before the beginning of years
 There came to the making of man
 Time with a gift of tears,
 Grief, with a glass that ran;
 Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
 Summer, with flowers that fell;
 Remembrance fallen from heaven,
 And madness fallen risen from hell;
 Strength without hands to smite;
 Love that endures for a breath;
 Night, the shadow of light,
 And life the shadow of death.

BOOM-ta BOOM-ta BOOM-ta / BOOM-ta BOOM-ta BOOM-ta — the Swinburne stomp. And ten out of twelve lines beginning with a noun (or "and" along with a noun) followed by an adjectival phrases—this sameness reinforces the unvarying, bass-drum BOOM-ta.

How far this is from Pound:

.....
 Thus was it time,
 And the small stars now fall from the olive branch,
 Forked shadow falls on the terrace
 More black than the floating martin
 that has no care for your presence,
 His wing print is black on the roof tiles
 And the print is gone with his cry.
 So light is thy weight on Tellus
 Thy notch no deeper than intended
 Thy weight less than the shadow
 Yet has thou gnawed through the mountain

There is no echo of the hoof-beat here, no stomping foot. Even when his song is most in-spired (most on-the-breath), he avoided stomping out the metre as though he were inveighing in some tantrum of hate or marshalling his anger to do battle against the usurers:

And Brancusi repeating: je peux commencer
 une chose tous les jours, mais
 finiiir (C.86)

How that sad sigh slides so gently from the first, doubled "i" to the quadrupled "i" with such heavy regret over the work still undone! Yet no heavy thump, nothing of Handel's heavy war-like rhythms.

Nor is this because Pound's metric system is quantitative or because it uses conversational forms. He was quite capable of using strongly stressed accents over relative long passages:

But for the clearest head in the congress
 1744 and thereafter
 pater patriae
 the man who at certain points
 made us
 at certain points
 saved us
 by fairness, honesty and straight moving.

Pound's counsel to "follow the metre of the musical phrase, not of the metronome," taken in the light of his own practice, taught me the importance of a rapidly shifting, rapidly modulating pulse, that alters from one textual fragment to the next. An effect of the use of constantly modulating pulse is that each segment, sometimes even each image, in my films has a high degree of autonomy. This makes each cluster of image and sound a quasi-autonomous bundle of energies.

This liquid is certainly a
 property of the mind
 nec accidens est but an element
 in the mind's make-up
 est agens and functions dust to a fountain pan otherwise
 Hast "ou seen the rose in the steel dust
 (or swansdown ever?)
 so light is the urging, so ordered the dark petals or iron
 we who have passed over Lethe.

This is the sort of example Pound provided me of the use of a rapidly modulating pulse, a pulse that changes from one textual element to the next; in this case it also provides evidence that Pound saw the mind as part of reality, and that he felt that our memories are responses to a gentle ordering force emanating from reality, just as the iron filings are ordered by a magnetic field. Reality, of course, is the Tradition and the Order of Being. Or, going even further:

Gindo C. had read "Monologion"
 vera imago
 and via mind is the nearest you'll get to it,
 "rationalem"

said Anselm,
 Guido: "intenzione."

Ratio
 Iuna,
 speculum non est imago
 mirror, not image;
 Sapor, the flavour,
 pulchritudo
 ne desibilis intellectu
 not to be split by syllogization
 to the blessed isles (insulis fortunis)

In as early a work as his first translations of the poet Guido Calvacanti, Pound made formidable claims for the powers of rhythm:

I believe in an ultimate and absolute rhythm as I believe the intellect is given in the word, that of the emotions in the cadence. It is only, then, in the perfect rhythm joined to the perfect word that the two-fold vision can be recorded.

Two aspects of this text, especially, have inspired my filmmaking. The first is an idea that it conveys by implication, that emotion and idea in a work of art must be at one. The second is the notion that when the relation between rhythm and image (the equivalent for the filmmaker of what a word is for a poet) is perfected, emotion and idea will become identical. In that text, Pound went on to speculate that:

it should be possible to show that any given rhythm implies about it a complete musical form —fugue, sonata, I cannot say what form, but a form, perfect, complete. Ergo, the rhythm set in a line of poetry connotes its symphony, which, had we a little more skill, we could score for orchestra. Sequitur, or rather inest: the rhythm of any poetic line corresponds to emotion... It is the poet's business that this correspondence be exact, i.e., that it be the emotion which surrounds the thought expressed.

Pound's teaching that musical dynamics carry the emotional and conceptual freight of a work of art, and that all musical dynamics originate in rhythm has been a fine lesson for me. Finding the exact rhythm to convey the desired emotion/idea has become THE primary consideration of my making. Rhythm, as Pound himself pointed out, has the power to remind us of, "the most primal of all things known to us."

In Pound's thought, the two points, rhythm and emotion, together with the measure of the vector of rhythm's power triangulate a third, that of time. In the "Treatise on Metrics" (appended to *The ABC of Reading*), Pound states that "Rhythm is a form cut into time, as a design is determined space." The medium wherewith the filmmaker cuts his design in "time" is not the "articulate sounds" of language but rather the kinetics of the shot, including those that derive from its design that conducts the eye through space, putting impeding obstacles and complexities in its way to slow it down or obviating them to speed it up, and the various gravities (i.e. weights-of-movements) of its colours. I would say, paraphrasing Pound, that THE primary failing of bad films results from the filmmaker's wanting for a keen sense of time, and a bad filmmaker is a bore because he or she does not perceive time and time relations and cannot therefore delimit them in an interesting manner, by gentler or sharper movements, more ponderous or more sprightly colour, and the various other qualities of movement inseparable from the image. I have learned from Pound to understand the primary consideration in filmmaking is that of creating design in time that is absolutely accurate to the emotion/idea that the filmmaker wishes to convey.

Further, Pound's courage in reversing that paradigmatic Romantic tropos of placing events in time has also been a great inspiration for me. The nineteenth-century was a century obsessed with time, with evolution (Darwin and Spencer), with the mind's recovery of past time (Proust and Freud), and with the history through which things come to be as they are (Hegel, the Young Hegelians and their offspring, the Marxists-Leninists and the legion of historicizing and relativizing sociologists.) The potency of history must never be overlooked; learning to dwell here among purely contingent beings and to cherish, even amidst our inevitable mourning and even remorse, the doomed beauty of all that is, is one of the principal lessons the wise person learns. But Mind can cancel the dislocations and disassociation the time creates and it can restore relations amongst phenomena. Like Blake, we can learn to experience time as space in which all that was once present is now and eternally present. Then time becomes exactly as film has it, the narrow ribbon on which is plotted the record of a sequence of crossings of the other dimensions of the space. The notion that all artists are, literally, living authors is yet another reason for the chorus of voices that speak fand as living presences, not just as ghosts) through my films.

There are further complexities in Pound's views on time that I have tried to capture in the form of *The Book of All the Dead*. In a letter to his father written in 1927, Ezra Pound provided a sketch of the outline of the *Cantos*. "Have I ever given you outline of the main scheme:::[sic] or whatever it is?" he asks, and then encapsulates the essential character of the form, "I. Rather like, or unlike subject and response and counter subject in fugue." Then, becoming more specific, he expounds upon the different moments of the work:

A.A. Live man goes down into the world of Dead
 B.B. The "repeat in history."
 C.C. The "magic mon~ni" or moment of metamorphosis, busi
 through from quotidian into "divine or permanent world"

Elsewhere, in 1944, he informed his readers that

For forty years, I have schooled myself... to write an epic poem which begins in "The Dark Forest," crosses the Purgatory of human error, and ends in the light, and "fra i maestri di color che sanno [among the masters of those who know]."

The comments also apply to *The Book of All the Dead*.

1.) The cycle's protagonist finds himself in a moral, emotional and spiritual crisis that brings him to the Gates of Death. A harrowing confusion of voices lead him down into a journey of the dead, the past, in a quest for that knowledge that might save us. This descent into the underworld also holds out hope for a vocation, hope that in the midst of the tumult of voices a voice, like that which saved Augustine, will be heard. But who can serve as the true guide? And how will the Poet come into his own? (Dante's questions)

2.) Beneath the surface differences among cultures are beliefs and actions that are nearly identically repeated across cultures. The journey (and *The Book of All the Dead*) is a quest from beginning to end; the portrayal of the journey across deserts and plains and into the mountains is, perhaps, the only constant of the entire cycle)

reveals these durable (not permanent) patterns, as recurring states of mind. Thus, by the end of *Lamentations*, the journey discloses that history is vectorial. There is no return to the past, no exit out of modernity, no way to resurrect those modes of thought that apprised of the Good. The vestiges of past inhabit the present as mere simulacra.

Yei, it is as forms rather than as actual instances (to recur to Platonism from which I distanced myself earlier in this statement) that the past lives in the present's knowledge, for the recurrent patterns known by consciousness constitute the unchanging objects of true knowledge. History may be a vector, but as it moves it drags the past with it; nothing is ever wholly lost. (This is the lesson of *Consolations (Love is an Art of Time)*.) Thus, in the end, the historical permanence of consciousness becomes the source of hope. It is in the realm of the Intellect that the permanence of that which passes is evident, and nowhere else. Intellect furnishes us with an image of eternity, though it is only an image we know, and not Eternity itself. Still, the image of what perdures does open toward the Divine. The ancients were right about this too, that it is Mind that leads us to the only knowledge that really is worth having, the knowledge that can save us. In this way, the quest described in *Lamentations* really is purgatory, by which human error is cleansed.

3.) Occasionally, visions of light, of divine energy, break through; the eternal comes into history and halts the movement of time. As in the *Cantos*, the root from which such visions grow is the sense of the mysterious communion of self and nature. As in Pound's work so in mine, the vision of Paradise does not disdain erotic experience, but rather exalts it, for this, too, is a mode of experience that stops the frightful movement of time. Eros binds humans to nature. Thus, in erotic experience, it is possible to recover, if only briefly, the Ovidian knowledge that one energy passes through gods and humans alike, that one energy connects all things with everything else.

And there is light—the same manifestation of the divine we find in Pound, in Dante, in Cavalcanti, in the neo-Platonic philosophers, in Grosseteste, in Languedoc poets and even, as Pound points out, in Confucius. From light we learn that all things derive from one source. (Thus *The Book of All the Dead* can be said, with facetiousness or exaggeration, to be about everything, but more accurately about that Being through which all existents come into presence.) Consciousness discovers, as *Azure Serene* joins with the *Cantos* in saying, that light "fills the nine fields to heaven"; and so it turns towards prayer, toward the contemplation of the gift of the given and towards the state of wonder that discloses "the giving of things." The culminating work in this section of the cycle, is *Exultations (In Light of the Great Giving)*. Here the gods show themselves again.

But only briefly. Not even Dante, as mighty as he was, could sustain the knowledge that was vouchsafed to him at the mountain top. Speaking of himself in the third person in a letter to Can Grande, Dante stated:



Bruce Elder's *Azure Serene*

And after he has said that he was in that place of Paradise which he describes by circumlocution, he goes on to say that he saw certain things which he who descends therefrom is powerless to relate. And he gives the reason, saying that "the intellect plunges itself to such depth" in its very longing, which is for God, "that the memory cannot follow." For the understanding of which it must be noted that the human intellect in this life, by reason of its connaturality and affinity to the separate intellectual substance, when in exaltation, reaches such a height of that after its return to itself memory fails, since it has transcended the range of human faculty.

Nor could Pound hold the experience of paradise fast ("Charity I have had sometimes/I could not make it pull through"); I believe that it was the lack of permanence of our experience of that which does not change that made Pound abandon his poem while it was still uncompleted. He could convey the experience only in "Drafts and Fragments" of an extremely tentative character. Even Dante's marvellous conclusion really doesn't make clear that our experience of paradise comes only in fleeting glimpses, only in "magic moments" that open up to something beyond the quotidian. I have tried to radicalize the ideogrammic form precisely to convey that sense.

Still, even if our knowledge of the realm is only partial and fleeting, the testimony of art and the testimony of the "masters of those who know" at least gives the wisdom a place to dwell, a place for it to abide until the time of discovery.

A final similarity between the *Cantos* and *The Book of All the Dead*. The form of *The Book of All the Dead* invites a similar response to that which Pound's *Cantos* calls for. Donald Davie gets at this best when he urges us to listen for:

the large scale rhythms that ride through the *Cantos* in our experience of them when we read one at a time and fast. And this is just the sort of reading we ought to give them — not just to begin with, either. This, indeed, is what irritates so many readers and fascinates an elect few — that the *Cantos*, erudite as they are, consistently frustrate the sort of reading that is synonymous with "study," reading such as goes on in the seminar room or the discussion group. It is hopeless to go at them cannily, not moving on to line three until one is sure of line two. They must be taken in big gulps or not at all. Does this mean reading without comprehension? Yes, if by comprehension we mean a set of propositions that can be laid end to end. We are in the position of not knowing "whether we have had any idea or not." Just so. Which is not to deny that some teasing out of quite short excerpts, even some hunting up of sources and allusions, is profitable at some stage. For the *Cantos* are a poem to be lived with, over years. Yet after many years, each new reading—if it is a reading of many pages at a time, as it should be—is a new bewilderment. So it should be, for it was meant to be. After all, some kinds of bewilderment are fruitful. To one such kind we give the name "awe" — not at the poet's accomplishment, his energy, or his erudition but at the energies, some human and some nonhuman, which interact, climb, spiral, reverse themselves and disperse, in the forming and re-forming of spectacles which the poet's art presents to us or reminds us of.

I would be delighted if someday somebody were to write similarly of *The Book of All the Dead*. Certainly, it is one reason I have constructed a form that theme against theme successively, in a nearly fugal form, not unlike that Pound employed in the *Cantos*. They are, as Davie suggests, energies that "interact, climb, spiral, reverse themselves, disperse, in the forming and re-forming of spectacles."

Then again, there is Wagner. After all, *The Book of All the Dead* does begin with the emergence of nature out of nothing and ends with the New Beginning. Its main theme is love and the irreconcilability of love with domination. Then there is its social import: its attempt to rescue a world presided over by degenerate idols. But enough of this...

As to your specific questions:

1) What were the names of the production company for *1857: Fool's Gold* and *Consolations*?

All my films are produced by my production company, Lightworks.

2) Which texts from the *Cantos* were used in *1857: Fool's Gold*?
Too many to list, I fear. I do have a copy of the texts I used, if you require them, but they are many and usually consist of just a few words.

3) Which texts from the *Cantos* did you read in *Consolations*?
Again, too many to list.

4) Would it be accurate to describe Alexa-Frances Shaw as the co-director of *Consolations*?

As regards film production credits, the term "director" makes less than accurate reference to the work done by most so-called experimental filmmakers, including myself. It suggests that the major responsibility of the principal figure amongst those involved in making a film is overseeing a set, blocking action, interpreting a script and directing actors. Like many others who work in "experimental" film, I really can't accept the division of labour that is customary amongst Hollywood filmmakers or even, for that matter, amongst so-called European art filmmakers. It seems to me important to hold the camera in my

own hands, to have my own body push it through space, to carve up the pieces it produces myself, to assemble them myself to produce the sounds the film incorporates myself, and to assemble the sounds into finished sound-structure myself, to decide on and to construct the sound/image relations myself. Thus, I call myself a filmmaker.

However, *Consolations* was a massive endeavour. I had to find someone to help me put the film together. Ms. Shaw was familiar with my previous work, and very capable. She carried an enormous burden, shooting bits and pieces of the film, editing some passages and creating many of the sound collages according to my less-than-precise instructions, and did all the optical printing, under similarly loose suggestions. She did so not only with diligence but also imagination. Her work belonged to creative order different from that those who carry out assigned work, however skilfully or painstakingly done. Consequently she suffered many of the miseries of a creator. Thus the place that she occupied in the making of the film seems well-described by the term co-maker. (Certainly, she merits an important credit.)

5) What is the running time of *Consolations*?

Consolations is actually three quasi-independent films:

- i) *The Fugitive Gods*
- ii) *The Lighted Clearing*
- iii) *The Body and the World*

As near as I know, their running times are, respectively, 4 1/4 hours, 4 1/2 hours, and 4 1/2 hours.

You might be interested to know that the names of the four new films that contain little bits of material from the *Cantos* are:

- i) *Flesh Angels*
- ii) *Newton and Me*
- iii) *Azure Serene: Mountains, Rivers, Sea and Sky*
- iv) *Exultations (In Light of the Great Giving)*

Their running times are 117 minutes, 115 minutes, 95 minutes and 121 minutes, respectively.

6) Are these films available for rental on video.

I'm afraid not. They are just not the same on video.

I hope all this is of some use to you. If you would like more information, or if you really do want more specific information on any of this, do not hesitate to inquire. I should hope that I could respond more quickly.

Yours sincerely,

R. Bruce Elder

Upcoming in May and June 1992

Rose Lowder in person with her films

4 Film-Performances by Ken and Flo Jacobs

Bruce Baillie in person with his films

Marathon reading of James Joyce's Finnegans Wake.

venues

Innis town hall: 2 Sussex Avenue (enter from St. George St., one block south of Bloor)

cinecycle: 317 Spadina Avenue (enter from alley east of Spadina, south of Baldwin)

art gallery of ontario jackman hall: 317 Dundas Street West (enter from McCaul Street doors)

hart house music room: 7 Hart House Circle (one block south of Museum station, off Queen's Park Circle)

ryerson polytechnical institute, photo arts building, room 307: 122 Bond St. (northeast of Yonge and Dundas)

